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AUTHOR Finzer, Sharon; Green, Patricia; Mizen, Julie; Sennstrom, Sandra

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ABSTRACT

This action research project involved the implementation and evaluation of a program to increase use of appropriate social skills among third-grade students. The problem of inadequate social skills was documented by means of teacher observations and notice of misbehavior forms. Probable causes for students' lack of social skills were concluded to be the changing nature of society, media exposure, lack of positive role models, and the lack of formal social skills instruction. A variety of interventions involving classroom climate, character building, and cooperative learning were developed and implemented, including: (1) heightening student awareness through pre- and post-intervention surveys; (2) weekly character-building activities focusing on a specific quality; (3) teaching of cooperative learning skills; (4) teacher completion of daily checklists on personal/social growth skills; (5) teacher documentation of parent contact for disciplinary problems; and (6) record-keeping of notice of misbehavior forms. Assessment methods included teacher observations, parent contact data, the number of misbehavior referral forms, and the post-intervention survey of students. Results showed an increase in students' use of appropriate social skills. There was a decrease in misbehavior referrals, and teachers observed an increase in social skills. (Twelve appendices include survey forms and intervention activities. Contains 28 references.) (EV)

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ED 422 116

IMPROVING STUDENT SOCIAL SKILLS IN STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED SITUATIONS

Sharon Finzer
Patricia Green
Julie Mizen
Sandra Sennstrom

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This project was approved by

Linda J. Bunk, Ed.D.

Facilitator

Gary R. Johnson

Facilitator

Beverly Gulley

Dean, School of Education

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Abstract

This report describes a program for increasing social skills usage. The targeted populations consist of elementary third grade students from a stable, middle class, urban community in a suburban area of a large city. The problem of inadequate social skills was documented through data which included teacher observations, and notice of misbehavior forms.

Analysis of probable cause data reveal that students demonstrate a lack of social skills. Contributing factors include changing society, media exposure, and lack of positive role models. After review of the current curriculum, it was noted that there is no formal social skill instruction.

A review of solution strategies suggested by experts in the field, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in a variety of interventions. They include classroom climate, character building, and cooperative learning.

Post intervention data indicated an increase of student's use of appropriate social skills. There was a decrease of misbehavior referrals and teachers observed an increase of social skills.

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the three targeted third grade classrooms exhibit the need for improving social skills in structured and unstructured settings. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes teacher observations, teacher developed behavior choices checklist, and Notice of Misbehavior forms for lunch and recess.

Immediate Problem Context

The school is located in a suburb west of a major midwest metropolitan area. The K-12 enrollment is 1,828. The school, which consists of early childhood, kindergarten, and grades three, four, and five, has an enrollment of 551. The following is a breakdown of ethnic characteristics: 82.5% White, 7.6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.8% Black, 44.1% Hispanic, and no Native Americans. The site has an attendance rate of 95.9% with no chronic truants. There is a rate of 10.9% student mobility. The site has an average class size of 25. There are 140 students in the

targeted area. (Statewide School Report Card, 1997).

The district has a total number of 103 teachers. The average teaching experience is 14.5 years. Forty-four percent of the total number of teachers have a Master's Degree. Average teachers' salary is $50,391. From the total number of district teachers, 72.8% are female and 27.2% are male. The district's teacher racial/ethnic background breaks down as follows: 99.0% White, 1.0% Black, and no Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or Native American.(Statewide School Report Card, 1997).

The site consists of six sections of kindergarten, third, fourth, and fifth grades, in addition to one section of early childhood. The core subjects in each grade, except for kindergarten and early childhood, are language arts, consisting of reading, spelling, and english, math, social studies, science/health, art, music, and physical education. In the third grade, students are grouped heterogeneously in all areas except language arts and math. At present, the district is heavily involved in the issue of technology for students and teachers. In the Fall of 1997, a second computer lab will be available for use by students and teachers. The staff has and will continue to participate in technology training. The building staff is also developing activities for our North Central Accredidation goal on character building.

The Surrounding Community

The site is located in a community that has a population of 19, 512 residents. From that total, the following is a summary of ethnic/racial background:

White 90.6%, Black 2.8%, Native American .2%, Asian/Pacific Islander 5.7%, Hispanic 2.7%, and Other .4%. In our school, 11.3% of the families are low income and 2.3% have limited English proficiency (Living in Greater _____, 1995; Statewide School Report Card, 1996).

The median family income is $68,425. There are 4,066 single family detached homes and 4,634 multiple family units. The median home value is $189,311. The average rent is $731(Living in Greater _____, 1995).

The average age of a person living in this community is 31 years. From the total number of males in the area, 491 are divorced. From the total number of females in the area, 747 are divorced (Living in Greater _____, 1995).

Of the community's total population, 25 years and over, 191 have less than a ninth grade education, and 600 have between a ninth and twelfth grade education with no diploma. 2,098 have only a high school diploma, 2,643 have some college education, 770 have an Associate Degree, 4,067 have a Bachelor's Degree, and 2,151 have a Graduate or professional degree (Village Demographics, 1995).

The district has consolidated the three neighborhod schools to grade level centers. The theory was to have a primary, K, 1-2 building, an elementary, 3-5, building, one junior high, and one senior high. As the population grew, it was necessary to move the kindergarten classes to the elementary building. The present K, 3-5 elementary building was once a junior high and elementary school

linked by a commons area.

The local Home and School Organization provides volunteers and is tremendously supportive of teachers, students, and programs. In addition, the school district has a partnership with the local park district. They maintain the grounds and have use of the indoor and outdoor facilities for programs. The school district also has partnerships with local businesses.

National Context

The problem of student behavior and lack of social skills has generated concern at the state and national levels. An abundance of literature and research supports the lack of and need for the teaching of social skills not only in the schools, but in the home and community as well. The topic is of such importance that it is a common and growing concern in society. This is evident by the number of times this issue is presented in newspapers and magazines and on the radio and television.

Cummings and Haggerty (1997), state that:

> Today's youth need social and emotional learning opportunities. Both the education and the business sectors have identified this need. A U.S. Department of Labor report (1991), lists interpersonal skills as essential for high school graduates if they are to succeed in finding meaningful work. (p. 28)

"Social skills are not innate. Social skills must be learned just like math and reading skills" (Spaide, 1995, p. 172). This statement shows the importance of teaching social skills in school, especially if they are not being taught at home.

"Most parents are trying to teach their kids the values of hard work, honesty, responsibility. But many of those parents have to fight against circumstances that would try any of us" (Bradley, 1997, p. 5). Parents have a very difficult job trying to raise their children in today's society. It seems that something is always threatening children: the prevalence of drugs and guns, media that glorify sex without meaning and schools that allow the 5 percent of kids who don't want to learn to destroy the educational atmosphere for the 95 percent who do want to be there (Bradley, 1997).

A recent survey by Public Agenda which is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research firm, found that 67 percent of the surveyed adults used adjectives like "rude," "irresponsible" and "wild" to describe American teenagers. Parents failing to instill character in their children is seen as the cause of youthful meltdown. According to the survey, 93 percent of Americans feel that parents have not taught their children honesty, respect and responsibility. Further, 91 percent believe that failure is endemic at all levels of society. Only eight percent of the adults attribute this failure to low-income parents alone (Bradley, 1997).

Helping children develop values such as honesty, trustworthiness, and self-discipline is as important a part of children's education as teaching them to read or how to cross the street safely. The values that children are taught are their best protection from the influences of peer pressure and the temptations of consumer culture. When children have their own values clearly defined, they can make their

own decisions rather than imitate their friends or the latest fashions (Eyre & Eyre, 1993). We must prepare children and young people to handle hostility and anger. They need to learn how to defuse explosive situations with words and actions that turn hostility into harmony (Baldridge, 1997).

If a child has a reading problem, we analyze it and devise an educational strategy to deal with it. However, when a child engages in antisocial behavior, we tend to judge when we should really say that the child has not learned the appropriate social skills (Mark, 1992). There is a great need to teach children social skills.

In summary, the breakdown of social skills occurs in various contexts. Four areas of concern are: untaught social skills, changing society, media exposure, and modeling of correct behavior.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

Literature-Based Evidence

Reading the newspaper and watching the news sends a strong message that people need to be taught how to get along. Content news of violent killings, divorce, and examples of not getting along with neighbors or work mates are a clear indication of a need for cooperation and social skills.

"It is any wonder that more than three-quarters of all Americans believe that this country is in serious moral decline?" (Dosick, 1995). To get along in the real world takes more than just learning academics. For example, more and more businesses are having a harder time with workers working collaboratively than having productivity as their main concern. According to Richardson (1995).

> Dealing with superiors, bosses, co-workers, clients, and subordinates or being a member of a team can pose special challenges that require new skills. In talking with professionals around the country, I've found that in every industry or field, success is determined by the level of your people skills. You will be working with people in anything you do. (p. 205-206)

This problem begins in the preschool years. Families need to work together to keep the home running smoothly. Preschool through college requires working cooperatively in small to large groups. The work force needs workers to get along not only internally but also with other companies. Whether being a leader or a participant, getting along is a much needed skill.

One area where social skills are important is in the retail industry. Companies have realized that their employees may have the need to be trained in the correct way to deal with the public. In fact, some retail stores use service evaluations to help develop and implement good customer service. One such

company, Brooks Brothers, has implemented a program called, The Hand Tailored Service Program.

The evaluation begins with a phone call and includes such questions as, "Were you greeted in a friendly manner?" and "Did the associate thank you for calling or offer a friendly good-bye?." Further, when the "mystery shopper" arrives at the store, the evaluation continues. Areas of evaluation are, "How were you greeted or acknowledged (smile, eye contact, verbally)?" Another question is, "Were you greeted in a warm and friendly manner and made to feel welcome and comfortable?" When the interaction is completed, further points are considered. For example, "Did the associate maintain a positive and friendly demeanor even if no purchase was made?" Finally, the question, "Were you sincerely thanked or given a friendly goodbye?" is used to close the interaction. It is clear that social skills are needed in the workplace in order to work effectively with the public. In the ending these skills should be expected by the public in hopes that a better service will become a reality (Appendix A).

Children's values are learned. If they spend most of their time watching television, they absorb the values or lack of values they see on the screen. What children see on TV is not always real. For them to develop into competent, confident and socially responsible citizens, they need to learn about real life and real values from real people.

TV is a window on the world. It exposes children to people, places, and concepts known only to individuals who have lived during that time. Watching a football game is not the same as being part of the game. Watching people care about each other is not the same as caring for others or having people care for you. Growing children need to experience life, not watch it. Values and social skills need to be taught through these experiences.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 43,000 pediatricians concerned about the well-being of kids from infants to young adults, have studied children and television. In 1989 they found, "The average child in the United States still spends more time watching television than any other activity except sleeping. According to the AAP, the typical youngster watches 3 1/2 hours of TV a day." (Jurs, 1992, p. 8).

Verbal put downs or caustic comments from characters of TV sitcoms are sometimes followed by laughter. Children get the impression that this type of language is the norm. They don't understand that in the real world relationships can be destroyed with these types of comments. Many films and prime time TV shows are sprinkled with profanity. Educators find it difficult when it is stated that this is accepted language (Parade, Chicago Tribune, Bradley, 1997).

Stress related illness among children and youth in the United States have reached alarming proportions. The percentage of teens who have attempted suicide at least once rose from six percent in 1988 to thirteen percent in 1993. Suicide was the third leading cause of death among children and adolescents in 1993. These statistics indicate that too many of our youth suffer from lack of human connection (Jones, 1996). Students need to talk and relate to other people. They have to realize that they are not alone. It is important that student recognize their emotions. If students role-play difficult situations, they can respond appropriately when these situations happen.

Another area of concern that effects social skills is the rising divorce rate. Some children turn to their friends more often that their parents or relatives for companionship. Male-female relationships are likely to be based on friendship rather than romance. These friends become more important than their parents especially when their lives are in turmoil. For many students, divorce is turmoil.

When a nuclear family is featured, there is nothing like "Leave it to Beaver" about them. Shows such as "Roseanne", "My So Called Life", and "Party of Five," display dysfunctional family life. These families are real to some students. Although the later Baby Boomers were the first to grow up with television, for them, watching TV was generally a family affair. Everyone would gather around to watch the tube and see what Ed Sullivan had to offer on a Sunday night. More often then not there was conversation and a parent nearby.

For generation X youth, (a term to describe children of the 90's) this is not the case. More often than not children watch TV alone. Television has become a solitary experience as a result of the rise in single-parent and dual-income families. The percentage of working mothers (with children under age 6) rose from 20 percent in 1960 to 60 percent in 1990, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This change left many kids home alone with the tube.

In conclusion, in elementary school, more than at any other time, the child is trying to figure out how things work and how and why he or she should behave in various situations. Cole (1997) a psychiatrist, writer, and Harvard professor, called these years "the age of conscience." It's during this time that students are ready to sort out their values and decide what kind of people they are going to be.

Site-Based Problem Evidence

In order to document the extent of the need for improving social skills in structured and unstructured settings, teacher/researchers in the three targeted 3rd grade classrooms consisting of 25 students each documented data. The following forms were given in early September after a parental consent form was sent home with students (Appendix B). Next, teacher/researchers completed observation forms (Appendix C), developed behavior choices checklist, (Appendix D), Notice of Misbehavior forms for lunch and recess, noted from the '96-'97 school year

(Appendix E), student surveys (Appendix F), teacher survey (Appendix G), and parental contact forms (Appendix H).

BEHAVIOR CHOICES	Week 1	Week 2	Total
Does not keep hands or feet to self	9	10	19
Disrespectful attitude	6	5	11
Out of seat at an inappropriate time	26	16	42
Does not pay attention	31	32	63
Does not stay on task	33	30	63
Excessive talking	50	51	101
Inappropriate behavior	46	39	85
Does not raise hand before speaking	36	30	66

Figure 1

Number and Categories of Behavior Choices Sept. 8, 1997 Through Sept. 19, 1997

Teacher/researchers observations of student behavior (Appendix B) revealed five main areas of concern. Over a two week period, in week one, 50 students were observed as excessive talkers, which means talking at inappropriate times (i.e. when the teacher is talking). During week two, 51 students demonstrated the same behavior throughout the day.

Another observation was that of inappropriate behavior with 46 incidents in week one and 39 in week two. Some examples of this behavior were whistling, silly noises, throwing paper, not sitting in a chair, and arguing. A third documented behavior was not paying attention. To explain, 31 students had a difficult time with

this skill in week one and 32 in week two. Also, not staying on task occurred 33 times in week one and 30 times in week two. Finally, the students demonstrated that they frequently talk out during class. The researchers found there were 36 times during week one and 30 times in week two that students did not raise their hand before speaking.

In summary, the most frequent behaviors were excessive talking, inappropriate behavior, not paying attention, not staying on task, and speaking without raising their hands.

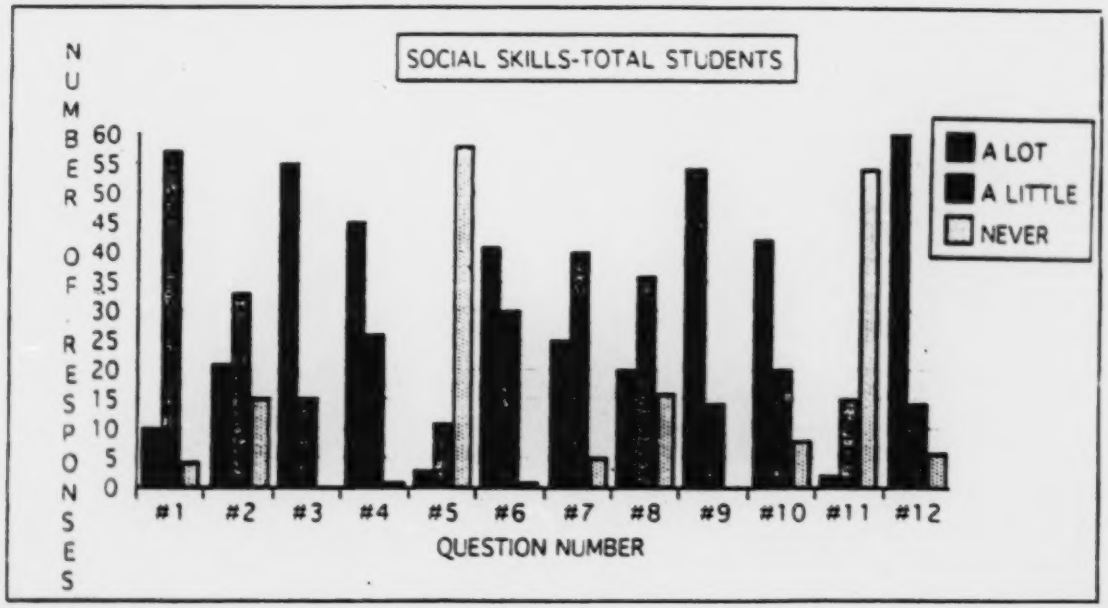


Figure 2

Number of Social Skill Questionaire Responses Sept. 1997

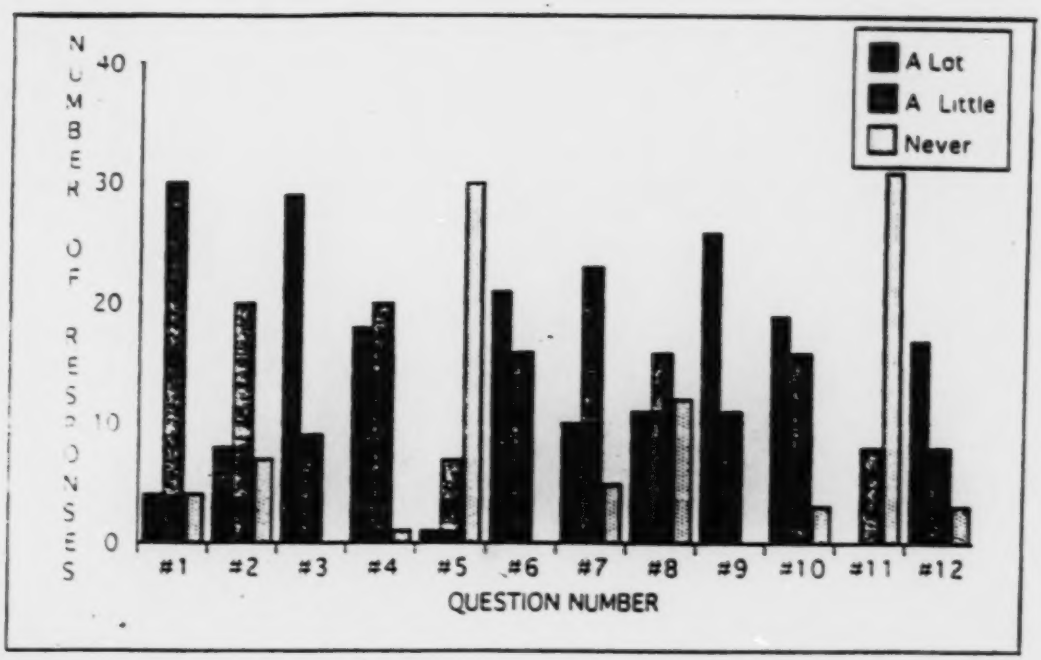


Figure 3

Number of Boy's Responses to Social Skill Questionaire Sept. 1997

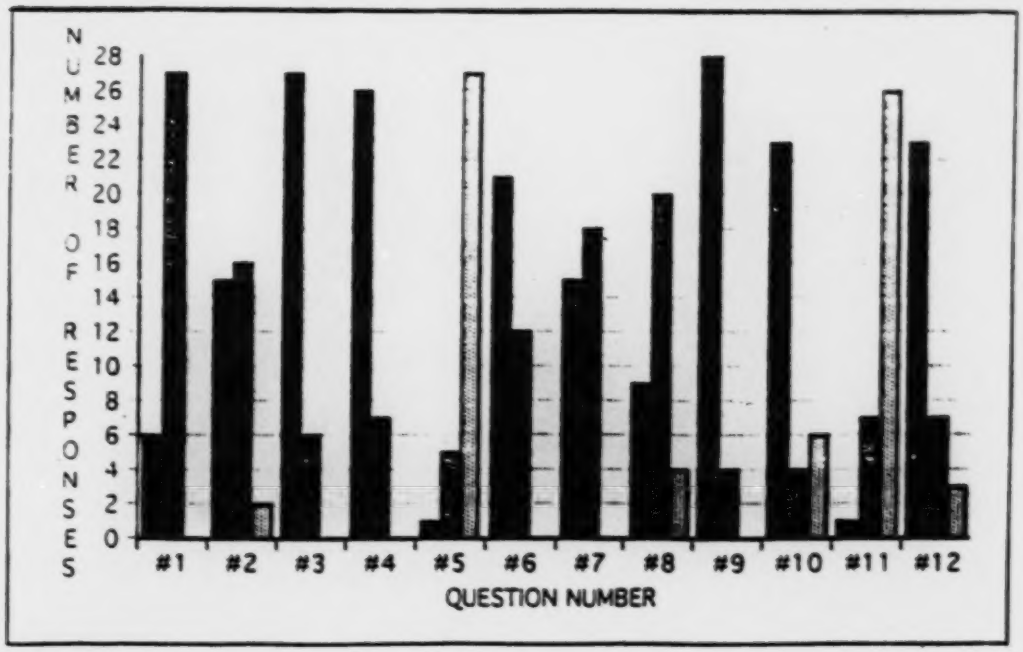


Figure 4

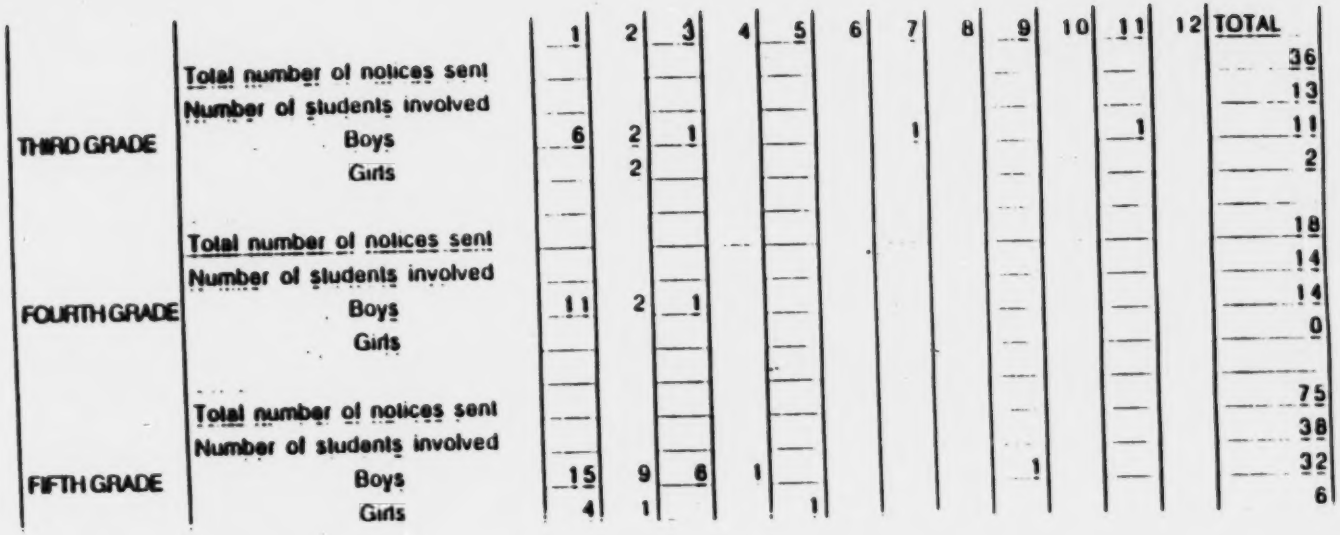
Number of Girl's Responses to Social Skill Questionaire Sept. 1997

Next, the students were given a survey asking how they felt about being faced with certain social skills. They self-reported (Appendix F) a higher level of social skills behavior than was observed by the teachers. For example, not one student admitted talking without raising their hand, although all third grade teachers had mentioned the students talked aloud frequently.

Another example was in question nine, "Are you kind to each other?," 54 tallied yes, although teachers viewed some students as seeming unkind. Students are quick to get another student in trouble by tattling on one another. Name calling has been reported at third grade, even though 54 students said they "never" get someone in trouble by tattling.

Question five stated, "Have you ever teased someone?" and 58 students said "never" with only three students stating they had teased someone a lot. On the other hand, when students were asked question eight, "Have you ever been made fun of or been teased?" 20 students replied "a lot" and 16 "never." That leaves 14 students who teased 56 students. These results suggest researchers to believe students do not or may not realize what teasing is.

In conclusion, from the examples described by the researchers, it appeared the students had a noticeably more favorable image of their social skills than was reported by teachers. Teachers had mentioned they had observed a lack of group or cooperative skills. At this time, teachers had not taught social or cooperative learning skills.



		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
THIRD GRADE	Total number of notices sent													36
	Number of students involved													13
	Boys	6	2	1				1				1		11
	Girls		2											2
FOURTH GRADE	Total number of notices sent													18
	Number of students involved													14
	Boys	11	2	1										14
	Girls													0
FIFTH GRADE	Total number of notices sent													75
	Number of students involved													38
	Boys	15	9	6	1					1				32
	Girls	4	1			1								6

Figure 5

Number of Disciplinary Notices Sent and Number of Students Involved '96-'97

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	3rd boy	3rd girl	4th boy	4th girl	5th boy	5th girl	Total
Inappropriate comments							
tease, bother, put downs	1	1			3	1	6
swearing	3	2	2		4	3	14
racial slurs	1						1
Throwing							
snowballs	1	1			3		5
food	2		2		5	1	10
sand	1						1
pens, etc.					1	1	2
Inappropriate or dangerous behavior							
disturbing other classrooms					9	1	10
assembly			2				2
running in hallways	2	1					7
yelling or noise	2		1				5
spitting			1				4
crawling under desks			4				4
hat issues					3		3
Stealing	1	1					2
Physical behavior against a peer							
push, shove, hit, fight, sit on	12		4		19	2	37
kick	3						3
bite	5						5
pull chair out from someone					2	1	3
Inappropriate to teacher							
uncooperative			5		8		13
disrespectful	6		3		17	3	29
TOTALS	40	6	24	0	83	13	166

Figure6

Reasons for Disciplinary Notices 1996 Through 1997

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The school being studied had a student population of approximately 600 students during the 1996-97 school year. During that school year there were 129 discipline notices turned into the office and sent home to parents. That involved 65 students due to some repeat offenders.

After looking at Figure 5 it is clear that the number of discipline slips sent (129) does not equal the number of offenses. Supervisors and teachers writing the notices were very specific and many times the notice mentioned more than one item. This was duly noted on Figure 6. In examining Figure 6, it is clear that students seem to solve conflict with physical means. The need for building social skills and other means of solving problems and getting along with other people is evident.

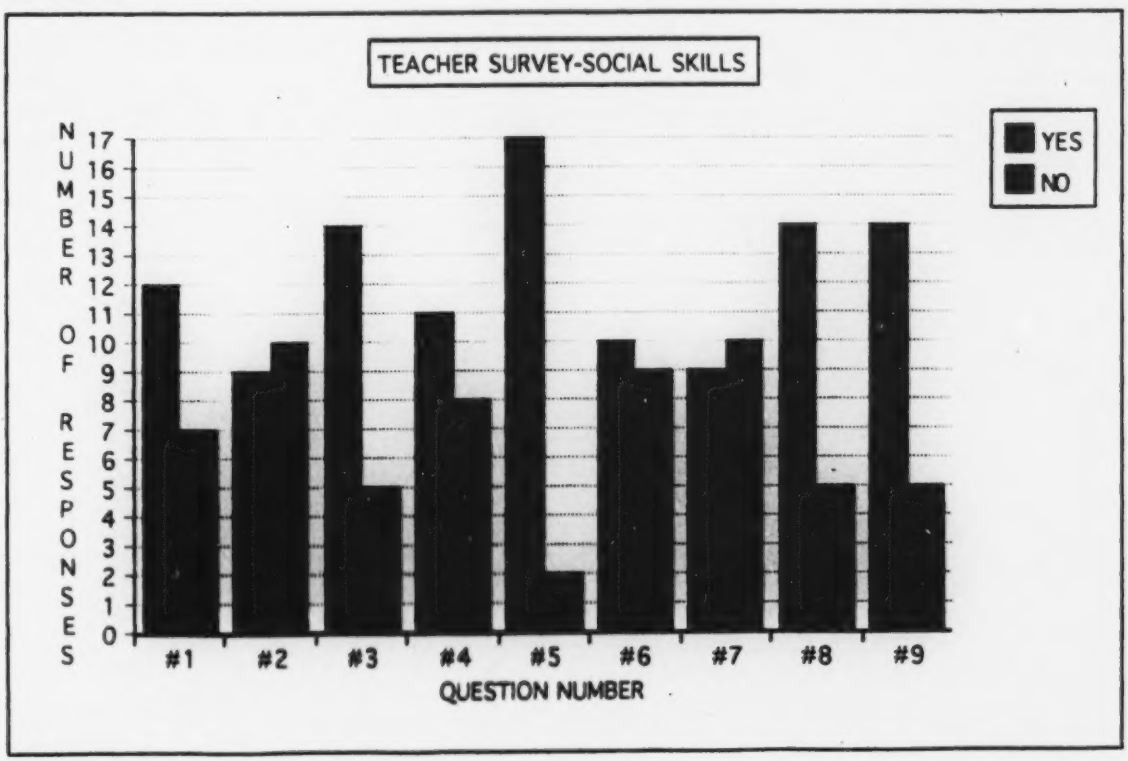

Figure 7

Number of Social Skill Questionaire Teacher Responses Oct. 1997

The teachers were given a survey asking whether or not their students were currently showing certain social skills. The survey was completed by Kindergarten, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers along with the P.E., art, music, and early childhood teachers (Appendix G). Either way, there are yes and no answers for all questions. Across the discipline and grade levels all teachers answered, "yes" that their students try to help each other! However, the survey itself seems to have been answered two different ways and thus may be flawed. Some teachers said they answered by thinking what happens most of the time. Others wrote, "sometimes" next to the question. Either way, there are yes and no answers for all questions.

An early childhood instructor says, "A big part of early childhood is helping children with their acquisition of social skills. Many of the above items are worked on daily."

A kindergarten teacher comments, "In kindergarten, we are learning most of this. Some are much better than others. Waiting for this turn is the hardest."

It seems the very early (early childhood) levels consciously work on social skills. By the time the student gets into third grade and above, social skills are not part of the written curriculum. Academics are stressed and social skills may not be stressed.

To conclude, the researchers attribute the high number of "yes" responses to the fact that the students were taught cooperative learning skills in the previous year.

Probable Causes

Teacher/researchers of the three targeted third grade classrooms, faculty and support staff on site, agree that students come to school without the skills needed to work cooperatively in the classroom. When the students were verbally asked by the researcher if they had been taught how to work in a group, their answer was no. It is evident to the researchers that there is a lack of social skills curriculum.

One cause that the researchers believe affects children and their lack of social skills is that of a changing society. There are many societal issues that need to be dealt with. One of the problems children face today is changing family values. The modern nuclear family is not as common as it once was. The post modern family is more fluid, flexible, and vulnerable to the pressures from the outside world. Elkind states that stress related problems arise because society view the needs of children as being less important than those of adults. Children of today are not as savvy as people think they are. Also, children today do not always feel that they are important to their parents. Teachers have reported more aggressive behavior and hostility on the playground, more depression, and more learning problems (Elkind, 1996).

In addition to family changes, violence in today's world affects children in various ways. Children are faced with a glamorized violence on television, in movies, videos, and games. They are also exposed to the reality of violence on a daily basis through the television news and other media. Some children feel scared and hopeless, while other develop aggressive behavior patterns that can lead to serious violent acts in later years (Garbarino, 1995). The possibility exists to help children cope with this violence. "It's essential that students begin to learn to cope with violence at the elementary level because even minor incidents

can be a big deal and cause anxieties for kids" (Ryan, 1995, p.83). In conclusion, society has changed and will continue to change, but the possibility exists that children can learn to deal with situations if they are taught social skills in school.

The magic of television to educate, stimulate and pacify has captured the American home. Many living rooms are now media rooms because the television set is the central focus. Spending endless hours in front of the television is not the best way for children to spend time.

Children's values are learned. If they spend most of the time watching television, they absorb the values they see on the screen. What children see on television is what television producers let them see. The pictures are usually focused on a small part of life and designed to capture the audiences.

Television is the educator, but who is choosing the curriculum? The Annenburg School of Communications in Philadelphia found that 55 percent of prime time characters are involved in violent confrontations once a week. If they were depicting the real world it would happen less than one percent of the time. Why should this concern parents? As far back as 1972, the Surgeon General reported that data left no doubt there is a definite link between violence on television and violent behavior in some children. The American Academy of Pediatrics said, "Sufficient data have accumulated to warrant the conclusion that television viewing is one cause of violent or aggressive behavior." (Jurs, 1992, p. 26).

Modeling is one of the most effective methods of teaching social, behavioral, cognitive and affective learning skills whereby the students imitate the teacher. Unfortunately today many of the models put into the public eye and modeled by children are not of the best character. The media, especially television, movies and videos often highlight poor and questionable behavior. Children seeing this

often choose to imitate the bad instead of the good.

Parents are the first and most important model for a young child. Twenty-six percent of U.S. children live in single parent homes. Forty percent live in homes where both parents work. That means for 66 percent of our children parental care, supervising, and modeling is a sometime thing. "On weekdays, working mothers spend an average of 50 minutes a day with their children; working fathers give their children just 12 minutes a day. During this time values have to be taught and modeled." (Bradley, 1997, p.4)

Finally, this may be one of the first generations in history not to pass on its moral teachings to its young people. Schools are not dealing with values, Hollywood is not helping the problem, and parents have lost their nerve to deal with the issues. Society is at risk of losing a generation of our youth.

A summary of probable causes for the problem gathered from the site, and from cited literature include the following elements:

1. Lack of taught social skills
2. Society
3. Changing family structures
4. More pressures on today's families
5. Media violence
6. Too much television
7. Lack of positive role models

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Research offers several strategies for improving social skills in structured and unstructured settings. These strategies focus on a child's individual needs as well as whole group needs. Many of these strategies build independent problem solving skills. These types of strategies benefit not only high risk children, but also provide early prevention for well adjusted children (Committee for Children,1991). The three strategies used by the researchers were cooperative learning, character building activities, and classroom climate.

Classroom Climate

Children need to think before acting. They need to learn that they are responsible for their actions. Respect, honesty, sharing, and caring start at home but need to be continued in the school setting through role playing and cooperative learning. Childs has said:

> School is the perfect place-as support to the home-for this kind of education to happen because of the time quotient. Children really need to learn these basic concepts as early as possible. These are basic universal ideas that teachers already deal with every day. We are not asking the teachers to take over the role of the parents. We're using the program in fact to draw parents

into the school (1995, p.79).

Regardless of what strategies a teacher chooses to use, desirable behaviors should always be modeled in the classroom. Children will learn appropriate behavior the same way they learn inappropriate behavior, with modeling, practice, and reinforcement. Students learn more from what a teacher does than what the teacher says. Esteeming climates provide role models who show others acceptable behaviors values (Bellanca, 1992,p.132).

The classroom climate should allow a student to be included in the rule making process and consequences for inappropriate behavior must be clearly part of that participation. Respect for others classroom rules and for themselves should be part of a caring classroom. A student's good behavior should be acknowledged by a "paw on the back" or being chosen for citizen of the month. In a caring classroom students get to know each other and their teacher through various activities that create respect and admiration for their differences.

Cooperative Learning

One of these strategies is cooperative learning. Since cooperation is a part of every school day and is increasingly crucial for the future, children need to learn to be accountable for their actions within a group situation. Children do not have innate social skills but rather need to be taught these skills. Specific social skills need to be taught so students can learn to respect the opinions of others, disagree with the idea instead of the person, solve problems, negotiate and compromise at the right times (Bellanca,1992,p.103).

Teachers interested in children as social beings recognize the need to

listen to the interactions among students in the classroom. In most schools, children work either against one another (by competing) or apart from one another (by learning individually). The chance to work with one another, to learn social skills and caring, is left to happen by itself during recess, at lunch or after school.

"Studies have found that cooperative learning has the potential to help students feel good about themselves, feel good about each other, feel good about what they are learning, and learn more effectively" (Kohn,1991,p.498). Educators should provide opportunities where students are responsible to one another so that they will learn social values and skills. Kohn stated. "Furthermore, students who accept their consequences, realizing they have not fulfilled their responsibility or obligation, are likely to learn from their mistakes" (1991,p.31).

Character Building

Educators at all levels need Character Building Programs to help students become knowledgeable on what is and then how to build character. The need for schools to play an active role in shaping character has only grown more pressing in this half-century. Many conversations in staff lounges are conversations about changing the way children act toward each other and tend to focus on curbing negative behavior rather then promoting positive ones. According to Noddings:

> First, and most important, care must be taken seriously as a major purpose of schools; that is educators must recognize that caring for students is fundamental in teaching and that developing people with a strong capacity for care is a major objective of responsible education (1992, p.368).

We all live in an age troubled by social problems that force us to reconsider what we do in schools. In an age when violence among school children is at an unprecedented level, when children are bearing children with little knowledge of

how to care for them, when the society concentrated on materialistic messages there can be no argument that we need to teach our children how to care. The main aim of education should be to produce competent, caring, loving, and lovable people. Noddings states:

> I have argued that education should be organize around themes of care rather than around the traditional disciplines. All students should be engaged in a general education that guides them in caring for self, intimate others, global others plants,animals, the environment, objects and instruments, and ideas. Moral life so defined should be frankly embraced as the main goal of education. Such an aim does not work against intellectual development or academic achievement. Rather, it supplies a firm foundation for both (1992, p.368).

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of increased emphasis on social skills development, during the period of September 1997 to November 1997, the third grade students from the targeted classes will increase appropriate social skills as measured by teacher observations, the number of students receiving another warning for misbehavior during lunch and recess, student survey, teacher survey, and the frequency of telephone conferencing or parent conference held at school discussing misbehavior will be counted. In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Student awareness will be heightened through pre and post surveys.
2. Weekly Character building activities will focus on a specific a quality.
3. Structured cooperative learning skills will be taught.

4. Daily checklists on personal/social growth skills will be completed by teachers.
5. Teachers will document parent contact for disciplinary related problems.
6. Teachers will check office records on the frequency of Notice of Misbehavior forms for lunch and recess problems.

Project Action Plan

I. September

A. Researchers develop classroom climate.

1. Teachers learn student's names.
2. Teachers and students establish classroom rules.
3. Teachers and students participate in "Getting to Know You" activities.

B. Teachers complete student behavior survey (Appendix F).

C. Students complete survey on social skills (Appendix E).

D. Researchers observe and document student behavior on checklist (Appendix B).

E. Researchers check office records (Appendix D).

1. Collect information on common misbehavior.
2. Check grade levels.

F. Researchers initiate parent contact forms for misbehavior (Appendix G).

G. Researchers begin using children's literature.

II. October

A. Teachers begin to implement character building activities (Appendix I).

1. Teachers and students focus on one characteristic per week.
2. Students become aware of other students showing these characteristics by catching a student doing one of these traits and

writing it on a post it note to share.

B. Teachers begin and implement cooperative learning

1. Researchers initiate social skills.

a. active listening

b. encouraging words

c. six inch voices

d. taking turns

e. sharing

2. Teachers form base groups.

a. trust building activities

b. make flags that represent their group

1. motto

2. symbols

3. members names

4. descriptive words

5. group name

3. Teachers form task groups.

a. check on use of social skills

b. complete assigned activities

C. Teachers team up with kindergarten class to share in teaching activities.

1. Kindies Buddies in reading

2. Kindies Buddies in math

III. November

A. Researchers will observe post intervention student behavior using checklist.

B. Students will complete post survey.

C. Researchers will compile and create graphs that can be compared to show a difference.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENTS

The data collection methods to be used to assess improvement of social skills include teacher observations, parent contact data, the number of misbehavior referral forms(Appendix D), and post survey by students (Appendix E). Teachers observations will target the following behaviors: Does not keep hands and feet to self, disrespectful attitude , out of seat at an inappropriate time, does not pay attention, does not stay on task, excessive talking, inappropriate behavior, does not raise hand before speaking. A behavioral checklist will be used for documentation. The number of offenses recorded on the behavioral checklist form November,1997 will be compared to the number of offenses recorded September,1997.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The terminal objective of the intervention addressed the increased usage of social skills, specifically encouragement, listening, courtesy and cooperation in structured and unstructured situations. Indications were that students lacked these social skills. Evidence for the existence of the problem included teacher observation, teacher developed behavior choices checklist and Notice of Misbehavior forms for lunch and recess.

Therefore the terminal objective stated:

> As a result of increased emphasis on social skills development, during the period of September 1997 to November 1997, third grade targeted classes will increase appropriate social skills in structured and unstructured situations, measured by teacher observations, the number of misbehavior forms for lunch and recess, student survey, and parent contact.

To increase student usage of these skills, the teacher/researchers implemented three strategies. Classroom climate, cooperative learning and character building were selected to effect the desired changes.

Classroom Climate

To develop friendly, caring, and inclusive classrooms the teacher/researchers began the school year focusing on positive classroom climate. The tone of the rooms was set with happy, welcoming bulletin boards and decorations. Names of the students were learned by the teacher/researchers and used as quickly as possible to

show that each individual was valued and remembered. Each child wore a decorative name tag to help in this task. Student names were also placed on the front of the desks and lockers. This helped the teachers as well as the students remember each child's name.

Classroom rules were established by the students and teachers during the first and second days of school. Classroom meetings and discussions allowed students to be part of the process of rule making so they could understand the rationale supporting them. Since students had some input for the rules and the consequences, researchers felt they were more likely to regard them as fair. It was also more likely the students would accept the consequences if they broke the rules. A poster, stating the agreed upon rules, and signed by everyone, was displayed on the wall for all to see and review as needed.

To help the students get to know each other, find common interests, and perhaps make new friends, "Getting to Know You" activities (Appendix K) were used. These activities took place during the first two weeks of school. A session usually lasted from 30 to 45 minutes daily. A game called "Hello Bingo" encouraged students to socialize and get other classmates signatures. This also helped build student self-esteem through feelings of importance and value. In the "Student Scavenger Hunt" students talked with other students to find out common likes, experiences, and characteristics. For instance, students would find someone who "has only sisters" or "is the oldest child" or "has a pet dog". "In the Spotlight" had the students answer questions about themselves. The students would complete phrases like, "The thing I like best about me," or " when I grow up I hope to..." "Summing Up Signatures" had students find someone who "went to a different school last year, has been on as airplane," or "went to the library this summer." These activities helped students see that they were valued and important members of the classroom community.

Cooperative Learning

In order for students to work together in groups the skills of cooperation were taught. Students learned there were rules they must follow if their group was to be successful. They also recognized that the success of the group was everyone's responsibility. Students had jobs within their groups like recorder, reader, materials manager, observer, or traveler. Everyone had input and took turns during discussions. Students listened to each other and refrained from interrupting when another student was speaking. They used small, or six inch voices, so they would not disturb other groups in the room. The children learned how to disagree politely, which was a very difficult skill and will be discussed in a later section. Students were taught to disagree with an idea, not with the person. Sometimes they agreed to disagree. Through cooperative learning the teacher\researchers taught the children to brainstorm, discuss and reach consensus through respectful, calm, negotiation and compromise. The teacher\researchers showed students that the group is usually smarter than the individual, and that a task that seemed impossible to do alone, was doable with help from the group. The goal was for students to recognize the benefit of working with one another.

Cooperative learning was used to teach social skills and was also employed as an instructional technique in delivering subject matter. The base groups were established during the fourth week of the school year and were maintained throughout the intervention. To build group unity and trust, base groups sat together. They also developed a team flag and a team motto. Base groups were usually made up of from four to six students of varying skill levels. The groups were given tasks to do together. The teacher/researchers used cooperative learning in all subject areas. For example, the base groups solved math problems together, wrote stories, drew pictures, and put on performances. Students in base groups also worked on KWL's, literature circles,

story maps, and research, among other things.

The social skills were taught directly, discussed, and modeled while the students were in base groups for cooperative learning. When teaching the social skills, a particular skill was chosen as a focus by the teacher/researchers. In order to teach encouraging words, for example, the class participated in a discussion of what that skill meant. Role playing was another way of presenting the skill. A class-made T-chart was developed on the skill and posted in the classroom. The T-chart showed what encouraging words looked like and what they sounded like. Both teacher and students referred back to the chart as needed. As the students worked in their groups, bonus points were given to them whenever the teacher/researchers observed that specific skill. At first it was obvious that student use of the skill was forced. When teacher/researchers got close to a group, nudges were given and voices became louder to ensure the teacher/researcher heard or saw them. In time though, the skills became much more natural. As the students became more adept at a skill, a new one was introduced and the procedure was repeated. Prior skills were continually reinforced as new ones were introduced. The children also were observers within their base group and would keep track of the times they saw group members correctly demonstrating a skill. At times student observers circulated around the room and tallied whenever they saw these skills being used by groups. After an activity, cooperative groups completed group processing sheets and/or individual processing sheets where they reported on how they felt they did on the skill and how they could improve.

Later after the study, when students desks had been moved out of base groups, the groups were occasionally pulled back together for activities. Incentives were offered to groups when, for instance, everyone did their homework, studied for a test or got a parent's signature on a specific form. Base group members also helped one

another when, after someone was absent, they worked together to help that student finish the project.

Character Building

In October the teacher\researchers implemented character building activities (Appendix L). Activities focused on caring, honesty, responsibility, respect, fairness, courtesy, cooperation, kindness, and generosity. Each character building topic had its own special poster the teacher\researchers posted when they studied that topic.

Usually a book illustrating one particular character building characteristic was read to the students (Appendix J). For example, in the book Me First, the pig learned a lesson about sharing and becoming a better friend. Be Good To Eddie Lee showed children being kind to, and accepting of, a young boy with Down's Syndrome. Another example is the book Seven Blind Mice in which seven mice learned a lesson about cooperation and the need to work together to solve a problem. Finally, Loop the Loop taught kindness, friendship, and compassion when a young girl became friends with an elderly woman who was becoming senile. The specific trait introduced in the book was then modeled and practiced by the teacher and students. Peer encouragement and recognition came when students noticed their classmates exhibiting one of these characteristics, wrote it on a Post It Note, and put it up on the special poster board. These notes were passed back to the students who were recognized for their good behavior at the end of the unit. This way the message for good behavior was reinforced again. An example of a post it note found on the special poster board might have been, " I saw Jenny being kind by helping Jimmy pick up his crayons that fell on the floor."

Originally, it was planned to spend one week on each of the character building characteristics. In reality, it took students longer to understand the idea of the character building characteristics than expected. Depending upon the characteristic

being taught, two or even three weeks were spent on each topic.

Other Courses of Action

During the second week of school a survey (Appendix E) was given to the students to see how they ranked their own behavior. The same survey was given at the end of the project (Appendix I) to see if opinions changed or stayed the same. Also in September, a teacher survey (Appendix F) was given to all teachers of the school to see how they ranked their students' behavior. This teacher survey strongly reflected the one given to the students. This helped the teacher\researchers as an indication of the accuracy of the student answers.

Near the middle of September, the teacher\researchers began observing five or more different students daily and recording personal and social growth. These recording forms (Appendix H) were compared from the beginning of the year to the end of the intervention to see if there was change and growth.

Also, during the first month of school, disciplinary forms (Appendix D) from the 1996-1997 school year were collected and studied. Patterns and problem areas were noted and compared with the notices given in the beginning of the 1997 school year through the end of the intervention, November 30, 1997. The frequency of discipline problems pre and post intervention were compared and theories for the change, if any, were considered.

Something that took place, but was not planned as part of the intervention, was a "kindie-buddy" program. The third grade students visited and were mentors for the kindergarten students. Some of the activities were counting, graphing, letters, color recognition, and reading together. They cared for, encouraged, and helped teach the smaller, younger students. The "kindie-buddy" program continued throughout the year with the third grade visiting their buddies monthly for activities.

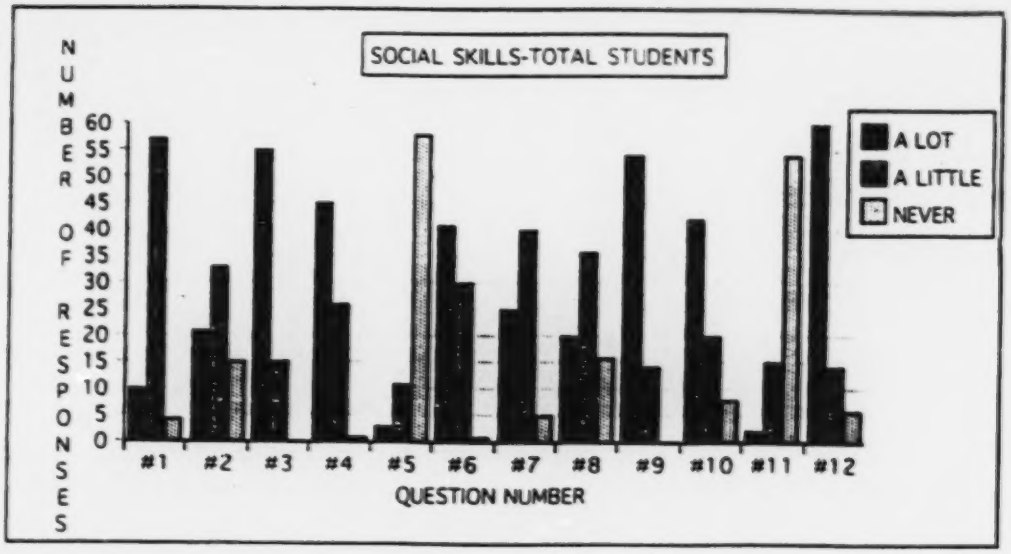

Figure 8

Number of Social Skill Questionaire Responses Sept. 1997

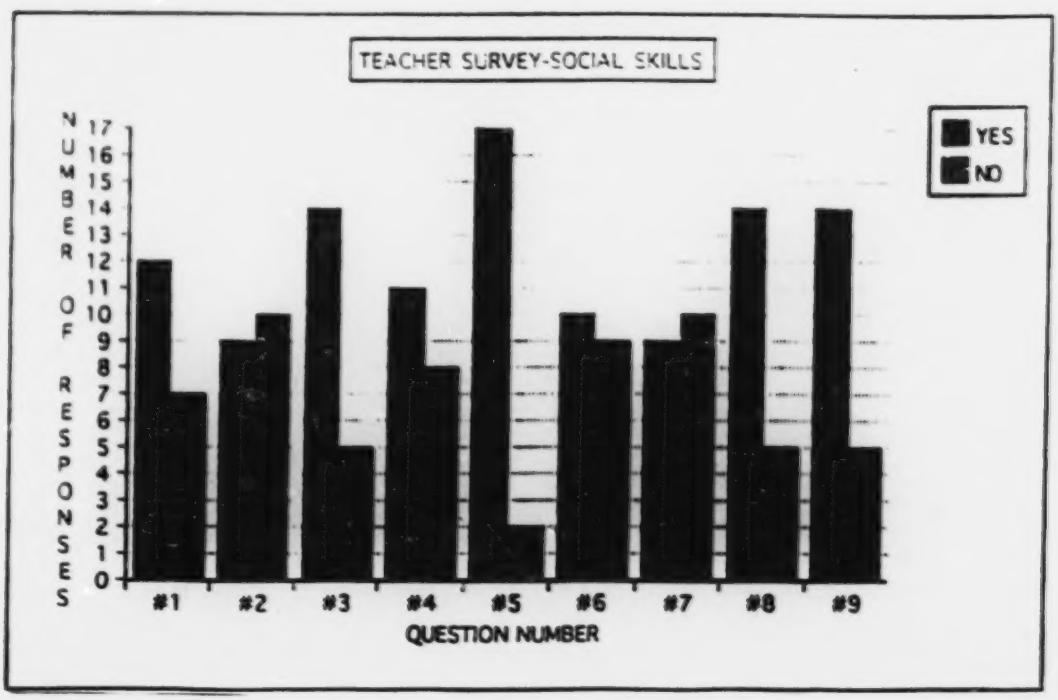

Figure 9

Number of Social Skill Questionaire Teacher Responses Oct. 1997

Presentation and Analysis of Project Results

One method used to assess student understanding and usage of social skills was a student survey (Appendix E), given at the start and conclusion of the intervention. The teaching staff was given a similar survey (Appendix F). The two surveys were compared and discrepancies appeared. Student answers indicated they perceived their use of social skills much higher than observed and recorded by teachers. The teacher/researchers theorize that the students either did not fully comprehend the questions, wanted to show their best side, or selectively remembered the good behavior, not the bad. The survey results also showed that teachers and students view situations in different ways and from different points of view. Question five might have been understood better if, instead of the word "teased," the phrase "made fun of" or "hurt someone's feelings" had been used. It also would have been better if the student and teacher survey had almost identical questions. Questions could have been lined up for easier comparisons. In addition, the teacher survey could have had the same answer choices as the student survey. Instead of the "yes" or "no" answers forced upon the teachers, the answer selections, "a lot," "a little," or "never," could have been used. Question 3, asked students if they raise their hand before speaking in class. Results showed 55 students said they "always" raise their hand before speaking, 15 said they raise their hand "a little," and no students said they "never" raise their hand before speaking. Teachers answered a similar question about student use of hand raising. Nine teachers said "yes," students raise their hand before speaking. Ten teachers replied "no" students do not raise their hand before speaking. Question 11 asked children if they tattle to get someone in trouble. Two students answered "yes," 15 students said they tattled "a little," and 54 replied "never." Fourteen teachers answered that question "yes," students tattle, while 5 teachers said "no," students do not tattle to get other children in trouble. Accurate comparisons of

these two surveys was difficult because questions and answer choices were not identical.

Disciplinary Notices for Misbehavior (Appendix D) from the 1996-1997 school year for all school grades were collected and studied to get an idea of problem areas of behavior. Twenty-one notices were sent home for inappropriate comments. Fifty-five notices were sent for inappropriate or dangerous behavior and throwing things. Physical behavior against a peer, including pushing, kicking, biting and fighting was recorded 48 times. Inappropriate and disrespectful behavior by a student towards a teacher or supervisor was documented 42 times. These results clearly showed a need for social skill and cooperative learning interventions. Students need to be able to cooperate and solve problems in a socially acceptable way.

Figure five showed the number of Notice of Misbehavior forms sent in each grade level and the number of students involved for the entire school population. The graduated fifth grade class had the greatest number of notices sent home.

Teacher/researchers also compared Notices of Misbehavior during the intervention with the same time period the previous year. The totals for each time period were very similar. During August through November 30, 1996, 21 notices were sent home. For the same time period, during the intervention in 1997, 18 Notices of Misbehavior were sent home. There was a reduction of three notices sent home during the intervention.

Table 1

Notices of Misbehavior August Through November 30; Entire School Population

Grade Level	1996	1997
Third Grade	6	2
Fourth Grade	2	10
Fifth Grade	13	6
Totals	21	18

Looking just at third grade data, a great improvement was evident. In 1996, six Notices of Misbehavior were sent home. In 1997, during the intervention, and the same time period, only two Notices of Misbehavior were sent home. That showed a reduction of 66%.

This data should be evaluated in light of the fact that the three targeted third grade classrooms were only half of the third grade population and approximately one eighth of the school population. It would be difficult to say if the intervention had any positive effects in these unstructured situations. At least 6 other classroom teachers at the intervention site were also teaching cooperative learning, character building and classroom climate activities during the 1996-1997 and 1997-1998 school years. That means a total of nine out of the school's 24 classroom teachers could have been influencing the results. A gradual improvement might be expected as more students go through and continue with these types of activities. If data had been available, it would have been interesting to study the Notice of Misbehavior forms from the 1995-1996 school year, before any of these interventions.

Students who moved in or out of the intervention site also affected these results.

BEHAVIOR CHOICES	Week 1	Week 2	Total
Does not keep hands or feet to self	9	10	19
Disrespectful attitude	6	5	11
Out of seat at an inappropriate time	26	16	42
Does not pay attention	31	32	63
Does not stay on task	33	30	63
Excessive talking	50	51	101
Inappropriate behavior	46	39	85
Does not raise hand before speaking	36	30	66
Totals			450

Figure 10

Number and Categories of Behavior Choices Sept.8 through Sept. 19, 1997

BEHAVIOR CHOICES	Week 1	Week 2	Total
Does not keep hands or feet to self	5	4	9
Disrespectful attitude	2	0	2
Out of seat at an inappropriate time	15	9	24
Does not pay attention	20	14	34
Does not stay on task	24	19	43
Excessive talking	27	38	65
Inappropriate behavior	21	18	39
Does not raise hand before speaking	18	15	33
Total			249

Figure 11

Number and categories of Behavior Choices Nov. . through Nov. . 1997

Some students with major behavioral problems who began the study, were later placed in alternative schools. Other students who moved into the district, came without the skills of cooperative learning, character building or classroom climate. Results from the entire school population had many variables.

Another factor that must be acknowledged as influencing the results of the intervention, is that each class of students was different. Classes were smaller last year. The third grade of 1996 was very different from the present class. In other words, one or two specific students may have drastically influenced results. Each year the make up of each class can influence overall class behavior.

The major method used to assess the effects of positive classroom climate, cooperative learning and character building on student behavior in the three targeted classrooms was the Behavior Choices checklist (Appendix C). Results were collected from the first two and the last two weeks of the intervention. There were 450 inappropriate behavior choices made by the targeted third grade students during the first two week of the intervention. At the end of the intervention, during another two week period, only 249 inappropriate behavior choices were recorded. This showed a decrease of almost 200 unwanted behaviors, and allowed the teacher/researchers to spend more time teaching and less time on discipline. This showed a decrease of four ninths or 44%.

Numbers decreased dramatically in all eight categories of Behavior Choices. The number of times inappropriate behavior was observed went from 85 to 39. Behaviors, such as disrespectful attitudes, surfaced 11 times during the first two weeks, but only twice during the final two weeks of the intervention. The number of students who spoke without raising their hand was cut in half, and went from 66 to 33. Since these statistics were taken only from the three targeted third grade classrooms, they seem a more valid indicator of the results of the intervention, at least in structured

situations. Something positive happened in all three third grade classrooms.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Before the intervention began, the teacher/researchers discovered that students lacked appropriate social skills to work together successfully. Some students refused to participate when working in groups. Students could not listen to, encourage, or disagree with each other politely. Interestingly, according to the pre intervention survey, students felt they had rather strong social skills. The teacher/researchers felt this showed lack of knowledge of what the skills really meant. The teacher survey showed that teachers felt student skills were, in reality, much lower.

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on behavior checklists during the first two weeks of the intervention as compared with the data from the last two weeks, students showed a marked improvement in social skills. Social skills taught directly and indirectly through classroom climate, cooperative learning and character building contributed greatly to this improvement.

The teacher/researchers found that the extra time and effort spent teaching these skills, over the long run, saved time in the classroom. All three teachers felt they spent less time with discipline, and thus had more time for teaching. Students became more able to monitor their own behavior, and that of their group. This helped students become more independent learners, one of teachings major goals!

The Notice of Misbehavior forms collected in the 1996-1997 school year gave an indication of the problem behavior at the site. Comparing this years Notice of Misbehavior forms to last year's for the three months the intervention took place seemed to have little significance. The time frame was too short and the numbers too small. Perhaps this part of the intervention could have been left out. The entire school should not have been polled and data collected since it was difficult to determine the effect the intervention had on the total population. There were too many variables. It

would have been good to focus just on the third grade class results. There was a dramatic decrease and comparisons can be made with some validity.

The teacher/researchers feel that the project goals could have been simplified. If the objective had read "structured situations" instead of "structured and unstructured situations" the interventions validity would have been easier to prove.

In conclusion, the teacher/researchers recommend that cooperative learning, character building and classroom climate activities be taught and used in all grade levels. These skills should be taught and used in the classrooms and used and reinforced, when appropriate, in the specials, like art, music, and physical education. The teacher/researchers feel that these items are important enough to be written into the third, fourth and fifth grade curriculum at the research site. It would also be good to teach these skills in the lower grade school that feeds into the research site, Perhaps a staff development program could be used to teach district personnel about cooperative learning, character building, and classroom climate.

In general, the teacher/researchers feel that all students, everywhere, should be taught this information. Perhaps we can shape a better, kinder, gentler, and more inclusive classroom, school, and community. We can try to make this world a better place, one student at a time!

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APPENDICES

BROOKS BROTHERS CUSTOMER SERVICE EVALUATION

ON-SITE SERVICE EVALUATION

DAY____ DATE____ TIME____ # OF CUSTOMERS____ # OF ASSOCIATES____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT_____ ASSOCIATE NAME_____ M/F
HEIGHT_____ HAIR_____ AGE___

1. How long did it take to be acknowledged by an associate? _____
2. How were you greeted/acknowledged (circle one) Smile Eye contact Verbally
3. If verbally, what did she/he say? _____

APPROACH and GREETING_____ ASSOCIATE NAME_____ M/F
HEIGHT_____ HAIR_____ AGE___

1. Did the associate seem genuinely interested in you as a prospective customer?
   1 2 3
2. Were you greeted in a warm and friendly manner and made to feel welcome and comfortable?
   1 2 3
3. What was the greeting used by this associate (if different than above)?

   _____

DETERMINING CUSTOMER NEEDS

4. Did the associate initiate conversation/build rapport?
   1 2 3
5. Did the associate ask questions about your planned use of the garment or current wardrobe to determine needs?
   1 2 3

MERCHANDISE PRESENTATION

6. Did the associate show multiple items in the primary item requested?
   1 2 3
7. If the merchandise was out of stock, did the associate offer alternatives (i.e.: catalog order, substitute item, order from another branch store)?
   1 2 3
8. Did the associate seem knowledgeable about the product(s) and offer infromation about merchandise and/or services?
   1 2 3
9. Were you shown and/or given suggestions for additional add-on items/accessories?
   1 2 3

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BROOKS BROTHERS CUSTOMER SERVICE EVALUATION

CLOSING THE INTERACTION

10. Did the associate attempt to build a future selling relationship with you (i.e.: ask if you were on the mailing list, hand you their business card or offer to put you in their client book)?
    1 2 3
11. Did the associate offer to put the purchase on your Brooks Brothers account?
    1 2 3
12. If the transaction was made, was the associate comfortable and efficient with the terminal procedures?
    1 2 3
13. Did the associate maintain a positive and friendly demeanor even if no purchase was made?
    1 2 3
14. If the return was made, was the associate friendly and helpful?
    1 2 3
15. Did the associate attempt to turn the return into an exchange?
    1 2 3
16. Was the package walked around the register counter and handed to you instead of being passed over the counter?
    1 2 3
17. Were you sincerely thanked or given a friendly good-bye?
    1 2 3
18. Was your name used when being thanked by the associate?
    1 2 3

*On-site evaluanon total: Multiply the number of evaluated lines by three (this is the "**POSSIBLE**"); add all the raw scores from each evaluated line (this is the "**TOTAL**").*

TOTAL/POSSIBLE _____

Appendix B
Parental Consent Form

September 11, 1997

Dear Parent,

We are excited about the third grade school year. One of our main goals is to improve social skills. Students have taken a survey to see how they handle certain social situations. Character building activities will be presented, along with cooperative learning. Our findings will help to determine ways to improve social skills at the third grade level.

Thank you for your support. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Ms. Finzer
Mrs. Green
Ms. Mizen
Ms. Sennstrom

.....

Detach and Return

I have received and reviewed the letter concerning social skills in third grade.

Name of Student _____

Signature of Parent _____

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Appendix C
Teacher Observation Form

OBSERVED STUDENT BEHAVIOR

DATE_____
STUDENT/S_____
BEHAVIOR_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DATE_____
STUDENT/S_____
BEHAVIOR_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix D
Behavior Choices Checklist

Date _____

Name _____

Behavior Choices
Does not keep hands or feet to self _____
Disrespectful attitude _____
Out of seat at an inappropriate time _____
Does not pay attention _____
Does not stay on task _____
Excessive talking _____
Inappropriate behavior _____
Does not raise hand before speaking _____

Name _____

Behavior Choices
Does not keep hands or feet to self _____
Disrespectful attitude _____
Out of seat at an inappropriate time _____
Does not pay attention _____
Does not stay on task _____
Excessive talking _____
Inappropriate behavior _____
Does not raise hand before speaking _____

Name _____

Behavior Choices
Does not keep hands or feet to self _____
Disrespectful attitude _____
Out of seat at an inappropriate time _____
Does not pay attention _____
Does not stay on task _____
Excessive talking _____
Inappropriate behavior _____
Does not raise hand before speaking _____

Name _____

Behavior Choices
Does not keep hands or feet to self _____
Disrespectful attitude _____
Out of seat at an inappropriate time _____
Does not pay attention _____
Does not stay on task _____
Excessive talking _____
Inappropriate behavior _____
Does not raise hand before speaking _____

Name _____

Behavior Choices
Does not keep hands or feet to self _____
Disrespectful attitude _____
Out of seat at an inappropriate time _____
Does not pay attention _____
Does not stay on task _____
Excessive talking _____
Inappropriate behavior _____
Does not raise hand before speaking _____

Name _____

Behavior Choices
Does not keep hands or feet to self _____
Disrespectful attitude _____
Out of seat at an inappropriate time _____
Does not pay attention _____
Does not stay on task _____
Excessive talking _____
Inappropriate behavior _____
Does not raise hand before speaking _____

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Appendix E
Notice of Misbehavior Form

1 2 3

NOTICE OF MISBEHAVIOR

DATE ISSUED: _____ DATE RETURNED: _____

STUDENT: _____ TEACHER: _____

Dear Parents:

Your child has shown improper behavior in the (location) _____

as described below and will be required to spend one twenty minute recess period in detention.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please sign and have your child return this notice to the Principal upon arrival at school tomorrow morning. If this notice is not returned on the morning after the offense, the parent will be called at home or at work.

Parents will be notified by the Principal if a child receives three forms. The third form will result in a conference with the Principal, parents, and the child.

Child's signature _____

Parent's signature _____

Supervisor's signature _____

A form is issued automatically for serious offenses such as fighting, racial slurs, destruction of property, repeated "benchtime", or refusal to obey supervisors.

White - Office Canary - Student/Parent Pink - Teacher Gold - Supervisor

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Appendix F
Student Survey

Date _____

Boy _____

Girl _____

Circle the words that show how you feel.

1. Do you say hello to other students when you first get to school?	A Lot	A Little	Never
2. Do you smile at other students?	A Lot	A Little	Never
3. Do you raise your hand before speaking in class?	A Lot	A Little	Never
4. Do you use "please" and "thank you" when you ask for something?	A Lot	A Little	Never
5. Have you ever teased other students?	A Lot	A Little	Never
6. Would you help other students if they needed help?	A Lot	A Little	Never
7. Have you ever given a classmate a compliment or a put up?	A Lot	A Little	Never
8. Have you ever been made fun of or been teased?	A Lot	A Little	Never
9. Are you kind to your classmates?	A Lot	A Little	Never
10. Do you wait your turn to speak when you're in a group?	A Lot	A Little	Never
11. Do you ever try to get someone in trouble by tattling?	A Lot	A Little	Never
12. Can others count on you to do your share when you work in a group?	A Lot	A Little	Never

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Appendix G
Teacher Survey

Teacher Social Skills Survey

Dear Staff,

As part of our Masters program we would appreciate your opinion about your students social skills. Please circle the appropriate response.

1. Do your students greet each other with a smile and hello when they first come into the classroom?	Yes	No
2. Do your students raise their hands before speaking in class?	Yes	No
3. Do your students use "please" and "thank you" when asking for something?	Yes	No
4. Do your students tease others?	Yes	No
5. Do your students offer to help one another?	Yes	No
6. Do your students give compliments or put ups?	Yes	No
7. Do your students wait their turn to speak when they're in a group?	Yes	No
8. Do your students ever try to get someone in trouble by tattling?	Yes	No
9. Can your students count on each other to do their share when they are working in groups?	Yes	No

Comments:

Please return to Shari, Trish, Julie, or Sandee by Wednesday, Sept. 24. Thank you so much for your input.

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Appendix H
Parental Contact Form

Behavior documentation

Grade: _____ Room No.: _____

Period/Subject: _____

Behavior Documentation

Teacher

Dates

Student Name	Behavior	Date	Action Taken	Parent Contact/Response

Appendix I
Post Student Survey

Date _____

Boy _____

Girl _____

Circle the words that show how you feel.

1. Do you say hello to other students when you first get to school?	A Lot	A Little	Never
2. Do you smile at other students?	A Lot	A Little	Never
3. Do you raise your hand before speaking in class?	A Lot	A Little	Never
4. Do you use "please" and "thank you" when you ask for something?	A Lot	A Little	Never
5. Have you ever teased other students?	A Lot	A Little	Never
6. Would you help other students if they needed help?	A Lot	A Little	Never
7. Have you ever given a classmate a compliment or a put up?	A Lot	A Little	Never
8. Have you ever been made fun of or been teased?	A Lot	A Little	Never
9. Are you kind to your classmates?	A Lot	A Little	Never
10. Do you wait your turn to speak when you're in a group?	A Lot	A Little	Never
11. Do you ever try to get someone in trouble by tattling?	A Lot	A Little	Never
12. Can others count on you to do your share when you work in a group?	A Lot	A Little	Never

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Appendix J
Children's Literature List

Baylor, Byrd. (1977). Guess Who My Favorite Person Is. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Bennett, Wiliam J., Editor. (1995). The Children's Book of Heroes. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Bennett, William J., Editor. (1995). The Children's Book of Virtues. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Brown, Marc. (1986). Arthur's Nose. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

Carlson, Nancy. (1990). I Like Me!. New York: Viking Kestral.

Cosby, Bill. (1997). The Meanest Thing to Say. New York: Scholastic.

Danziger, Paula. (1994). Amber Brown is Not a Crayon. New York: Scholastic.

Demi. (1990). The Empty Pot. New York: Henry Holt And Company.

Dugan, Barbara. (1993). Loop the Loop. New York: Puffin Books.

Erickson, Russell E. (1993). A Toad for Tuesday. New York: Beech Tree.

Fleming, Virginia. (1993). Be Good to Eddie Lee. New York: Philomel Books.

Gantos, Jack. (1997). Rotten Ralph's Rotten Romance. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Kline, Suzy. (1995). Marvin and the Mean Words. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Kline, Suzy. (1995). Mary Marony and the Chocolate Surprise. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Lester, Helen. (1992). Me First. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Lobel, Arnold. (1970). Frog and Toad are Friends. New York: Harper-Collins.

Appendix J continued

Monson, A.M. (1997). Wanted: Best Friend. New York: Dial Books For Young Readers

Pfister, Marcus. (1992). The Rainbow Fish. New York: North-South Books.

Polacco, Patricia. (1994). Pink and Say. New York: Philomel Books.

Stevenson, James. (1981). The Night After Christmas. New York: Mulberry Books.

Waldron, Jan L. (1997). Angel Pigs and the Hidden Christmas. New York: Dutton Children's Books.

Young, Ed. (1992). Seven Blind Mice. New York: Philomel Books.

Appendix K
Classroom Climate Activities

"Step Into A New School Year!" Bulletin Board

Sheets 7–10

Invite students to step into a successful school year.

Directions:

1. Cover your bulletin board with blue background paper.
2. Punch out the die-cut pieces and title.
3. Arrange the pieces on the board as shown.

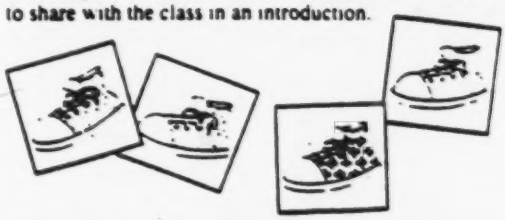
Variations:

- Take photographs of students as they arrive on the first day. Add the photos to the display.
- Duplicate the high-top sneaker pattern on page 8 for each student to color and cut out. Have each child label the sneaker with his name and a goal for the year. Add the sneakers to the bulletin board.
- Duplicate the sneaker pattern on page 8 for students to color. Add the sneakers to the bulletin board as a colorful border.

Extension Activities:

- Help students learn classmates' names with a game of Hello Bingo on the first day. Duplicate the gameboard pattern on page 7 for each student. Have each child gather signatures from classmates, one per square, until his card is full. Then provide markers, such as counters or beans, for students to use to cover names as you call them out. When a student covers a row horizontally or vertically, he calls out "Hello!" Award brightly colored shoelaces or pencils as prizes, if desired.

- For another "getting-to-know-you" activity, duplicate two copies of the shoe patterns on page 9. Cut out the shoes and mix them up. Pass out one shoe cutout to each student. Have each student find the classmate with the matching shoe and discover three things about him or her to share with the class in an introduction.



- To promote class unity, let students vote on a class mascot. Find a stuffed animal or draw a poster of the mascot to keep in the classroom all year.
- Here's a math activity that's a shoe-in for fun! Take a tour of the school to make sure students are familiar with the location of important areas such as the office, media center, and cafeteria. Then return to your classroom and send student pairs out to measure the number of steps it takes to reach each area from your door. Compare the distances on a graph at the end of the activity.

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Appendix K continued

Name _____ Interest inventory

In The Spotlight!

In the box, draw and color a picture of how you look today.

Now finish each sentence below.

1. The things I like best about me are _____

2. My favorite color is _____.

3. The things I like best about my family are _____

4. When I grow up I hope to _____

5. My favorite food is _____.

6. My favorite book is _____.

7. My favorite sport is _____.

8. If I could have one wish come true, I would wish _____

Bonus Box: Color the spotlights around your picture. Then, on the back of this sheet, write three things you hope will happen during the school year.

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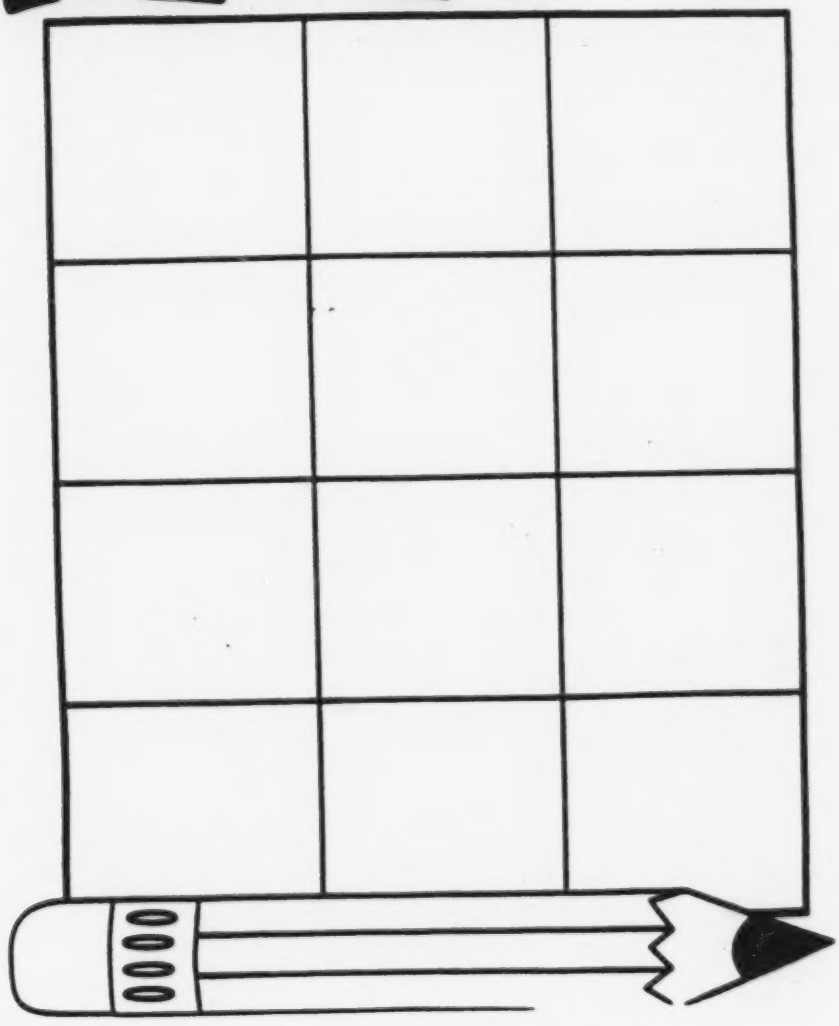
HELLO Bingo



Name _____ Back-To-School

STUDENT SCAVENGER HUNT

1. _____ likes to ride a bike.
2. _____ likes to sing.
3. _____ has on a red shirt.
4. _____ has blue eyes.
5. _____ likes to play checkers.
6. _____ has only sisters.
7. _____ has a birthday in the winter.
8. _____ likes to eat pizza.
9. _____ likes the color green.
10. _____ has brown hair.
11. _____ has a pet dog.
12. _____ is the oldest child in his or her family.
13. _____ likes to eat ice cream.
14. _____ is left-handed.
15. _____ likes to play baseball.

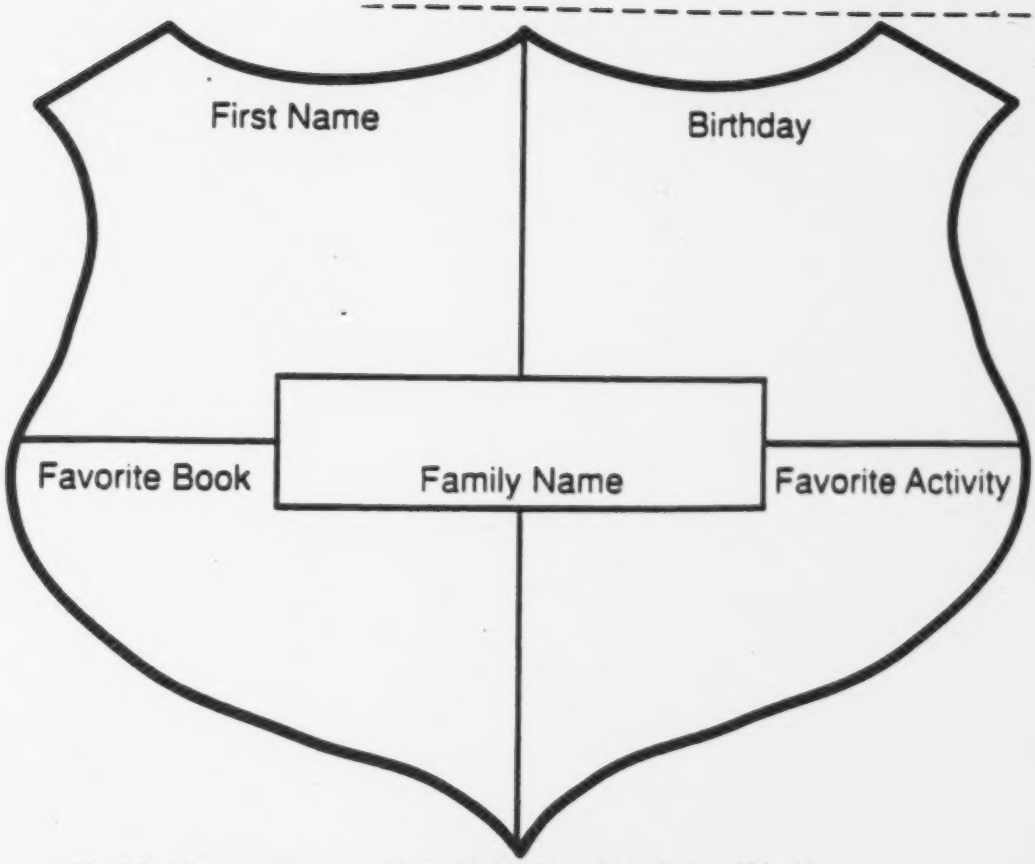
Appendix K continued

Name _____ Back-to-school activity

Summing Up Signatures

Total Points _____

Has been on an airplane 1 point	Went to the library during the summer 1 point	Is wearing tennis shoes 1 point	Has two sisters 1 point
Has a pet dog 2 points	Has taken swimming lessons 2 points	Went to a different school last year 2 points	Has one brother 2 points
Is wearing red 3 points	Wears glasses 3 points	Plays on a soccer team 3 points	Rides a bus to school 3 points
Brought lunch from home today 4 points	Has freckles 4 points	Likes to eat pizza 4 points	Has six letters in his or her first name 4 points



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BUILDING CHARACTER

Compassion. Helpfulness. Perseverance. Respect. Responsibility. The list of key character-building qualities goes on and on—and so does the challenge of teaching these virtues to young children. Use the following character-building activities from our subscribers to help your students learn to care for themselves and others.

HELPFULNESS

Respect Day

Designate a day for your classroom, grade level, or entire school to refine their skills of respect. Start Respect Day with a class meeting or an assembly. Discuss the meaning of respect, have volunteers role-play respectful behavior, and answer students' questions. Then challenge students and staff members to spend the entire day displaying their most respectful behavior. The large-scale, concrete example of respect will encourage students to carry this positive behavior beyond the school walls. You may find that more value days—like Courtesy Day, Cooperation Day, and Kindness Day—are in order!

Debbie Green—Gr. 3, Northwest Heights Elementary School
Durant, OK

COMPASSION

Caring For Others

Nurture compassion in your students with monthly community service projects. Ideas include collecting wish-list items for a local animal shelter, making get-well cards for hospital patients, creating holiday cards or ornaments for a retirement home, collecting needed items for a local shelter, and helping older neighbors with light yard work. Students will experience the joy of giving of themselves and come to realize the benefits of compassion—by both the giver and the receiver.

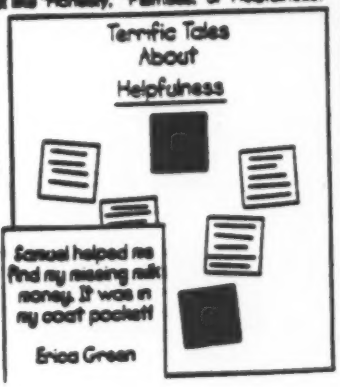
Jane Bennan—Gr. 2, Dover Elementary, Dover, PA

COOPERATION

Terrific Tales

Reinforce a variety of character-building traits with a Terrific Tales board. Title a sheet of poster board "Terrific Tales About _____" and laminate the resulting poster for durability. Display the poster in an easily accessible location. Near the poster, place a pad of self-adhesive notes and a container of pencils. At the start of each week use a wipe-off marker to program the poster with a desired character trait like "Honesty," "Fairness," or "Helpfulness." After confirming that students understand the meaning of the spotlighted trait, invite them to be on the lookout for examples of it. When a youngster realizes that a classmate has exhibited the featured behavior toward him, he goes to the poster, describes the incident on a self-adhesive note, and signs and attaches the note to the poster. During the week read some of the posted notes aloud. Then, at the end of the week, read each note aloud and present it to the student who demonstrated the featured behavior. To reprogram the poster, wipe off and replace the featured trait. Your students' self-esteems are sure to soar!

Valerie Mason—Gra. K-3
District 504
Burwell, NE



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Characters With Character

Children's literature is an excellent place to find examples of positive character traits. Follow up an oral reading of a favorite picture book or beginning chapter book by asking students to identify the positive values of the main character(s). To create an on-going display, write the student responses on individual cards or cutouts and post them on a bulletin board titled "Storytime Values." Repeat the activity each time you finish an oral reading of a children's book. Periodically review the character traits on display and add a star to each card that features a value that your students feel they consistently portray.

Jackie Hostetler—Gr. 1
Tri-County R-VII Elementary School, Jamesport, MO

CONFIDENCE

Positive Response

Promote student dignity and heighten self-esteem with this positive response strategy. When a student responds incorrectly to a question, instead of pointing out that his answer is wrong, state the question to which the student's answer corresponds. Then provide the correct answer to the original question. For example, if the question asked is "What is the sum of 6 + 7?", and a student replies "14"—respond as follows: "14 is the sum of 7 + 7. That means the sum of 6 + 7 is 13." Since words like "no" and "wrong" are avoided, a student's dignity is preserved and the feeling of being wrong is minimized. This approach is sure to increase student participation. And since students learn by example, you can look forward to hearing your youngsters stating positive responses for incorrect answers, too!

Pat Boswell—Gr. 3, Bonn Elementary School, Germany

DIGNITY

RESPECT

Roll Call For Respect

Encourage respect among your students with this two-fold tip. When you observe a student showing respect for herself, for others, or for her school or community, award the student with a respect coupon. When a child earns three coupons, invite the student and a special guest to eat their lunches at a designated "Table Of Respect." When a fourth coupon is earned, allow the student to place a personalized cutout on a classroom display titled "Roll Call For Respect." This visual reminder of respectful behavior makes it easy for students and visitors to see that respect is a valued trait in your classroom.

Debbie Green—Gr. 3
Northwest Heights Elementary School
Durant, OK

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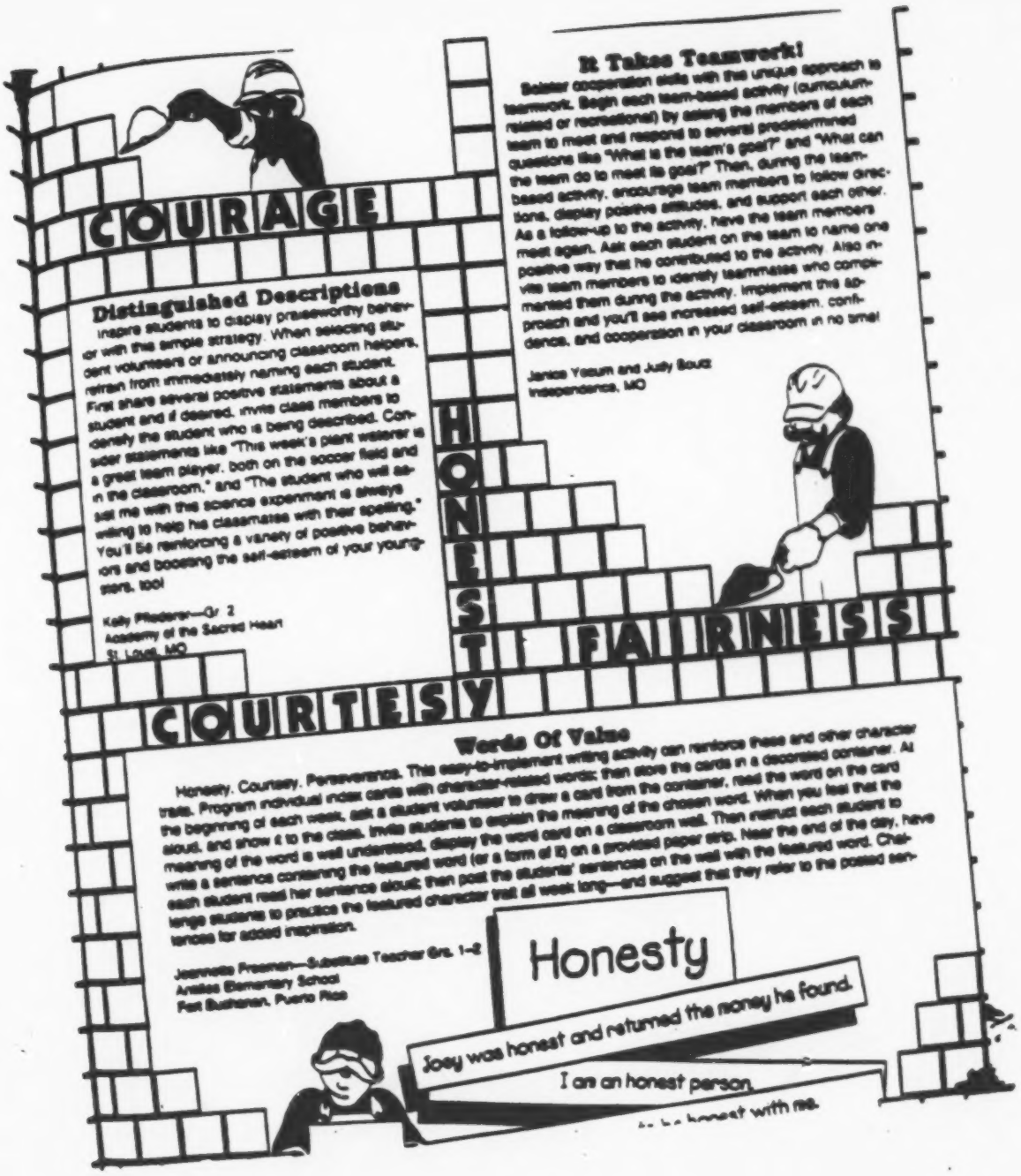
Appendix L continued


COURAGE
HONESTY
COURTESY
FAIRNESS
Distinguished Descriptions
Inspire students to display praiseworthy behavior with this simple strategy. When selecting student volunteers or announcing classroom helpers, refrain from immediately naming each student. First share several positive statements about a student and if desired, invite class members to identify the student who is being described. Consider statements like "This week's plant waterer is a great team player, both on the soccer field and in the classroom," and "The student who will assist me with the science experiment is always willing to help his classmates with their spelling." You'll be reinforcing a variety of positive behaviors and boosting the self-esteem of your youngsters, too!
Kelly Pfleiderer—Gr. 2
Academy of the Sacred Heart
St. Louis, MO
It Takes Teamwork!
Bolster cooperation skills with this unique approach to teamwork. Begin each team-based activity (curriculum-related or recreational) by asking the members of each team to meet and respond to several predetermined questions like "What is the team's goal?" and "What can the team do to meet its goal?" Then, during the team-based activity, encourage team members to follow directions, display positive attitudes, and support each other. As a follow-up to the activity, have the team members meet again. Ask each student on the team to name one positive way that he contributed to the activity. Also invite team members to identify teammates who complimented them during the activity. Implement this approach and you'll see increased self-esteem, confidence, and cooperation in your classroom in no time!
Janice Yasum and Judy Bautz
Independence, MO
Words Of Value
Honesty. Courtesy. Perseverance. This easy-to-implement writing activity can reinforce these and other character traits. Program individual index cards with character-related words; then store the cards in a decorated container. At the beginning of each week, ask a student volunteer to draw a card from the container, read the word on the card aloud, and show it to the class. Invite students to explain the meaning of the chosen word. When you feel that the meaning of the word is well understood, display the word card on a classroom wall. Then instruct each student to write a sentence containing the featured word (or a form of it) on a provided paper strip. Near the end of the day, have each student read her sentence aloud; then post the students' sentences on the wall with the featured word. Challenge students to practice the featured character trait all week long—and suggest that they refer to the posted sentences for added inspiration.
Jeannette Freeman—Substitute Teacher Grs. 1–2
Aratitas Elementary School
Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico
Honesty
Joey was honest and returned the money he found.
I am an honest person.
Be honest with me.

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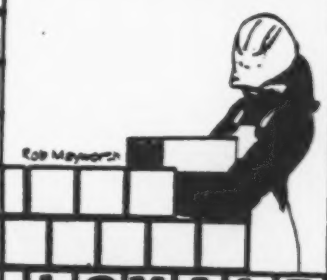
The Wall Of Fame

Here's an ideal way to recognize your students' good deeds. Title an area of a classroom wall "The Wall Of Fame" and duplicate a supply of the induction forms on page 81. When a student observes a classmate performing a good deed like being kind, compassionate, or helpful, he completes and submits to you a copy of the induction form. Post the completed forms, along with snapshots of the inductees, on The Wall Of Fame. As students earn recognition, they will be encouraged to continue their kind behavior.

Adriana Procacco—Gr. 2
Eagle Elementary School
West Bloomfield, MI

RESPONSIBILITY



LOYALTY

Hug Day

Hugs, hugs, hugs! What a great way to show someone you care! Have students describe how they feel when they are hugged and when they give hugs. Lead students to understand that hugging is one way to show someone that you care. Then find out other ways your students show their friends and family members that they care about them. To encourage students to show their compassion for others, designate one day a month as Hug Day (or Show You Care Day). On Hug Day display a sign on the classroom door that invites all who enter the room to demonstrate their caring spirit throughout the day. If desired, post a list of appropriate caring gestures like hugs, handshakes, and pats on the back. At the end of the day, invite students to talk about how showing and receiving compassion made them feel. Just imagine the good things you'll hear!

Nancy Kaczorowski
Luverne, MN

PERSEVERANCE

Wiggling With Character

Keep a visible reminder of classroom character goals with this year-round display. You will need a large construction-paper circle for each month of the school year, plus one more. For each month choose one value on which to focus; then write the selected values near the tops of the individual circles. Decorate the remaining cutout to resemble the face of a caterpillar. Mount the circles in sequential order on a classroom wall. Be sure the resulting character caterpillar is easily accessible. Each month introduce the selected value, and discuss with your students what the value means and different ways that it can be demonstrated. Label the corresponding caterpillar segment accordingly. Then challenge students to display the featured character trait throughout the month. To reinforce your students' efforts, place a Gummy caterpillar (worm) in a clear container on your desk each time you observe a student displaying the featured value. When you have a class supply, distribute the candies to the students; then start another collection. Throughout the year periodically review the character goals of past months. You can count on plenty of positive growth when you use this approach to character education!

Kristi Gullett—Gr. 2
Peoria Christian School
Peoria, IL

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Appendix L continued

BUILDING CHARACTER WITH...HONESTY!

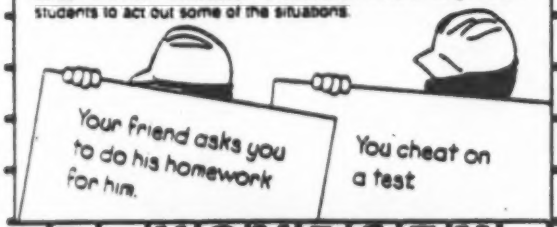
Instill the virtue of integrity by teaching the importance of honesty. Use these activities to encourage youngsters to make conscientious and trustworthy decisions.

Ideas by Darcy Brown

HONESTY

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

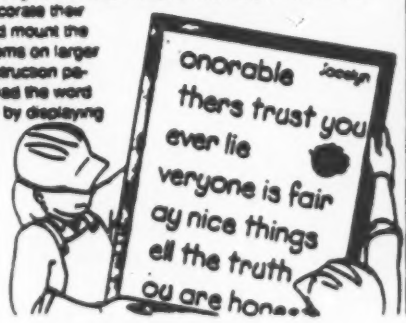
Inspire your youngsters to make honest and truthful decisions with this notable idea! In advance write a number of decision-making situations on index cards. Place the cards in an empty container. To begin the lesson, have students talk about times they have been in situations that tested their honesty. Then have a child draw a card from the container and read it aloud. Ask youngsters to describe what they would do in this situation and explain why. Encourage discussion among the students. When appropriate have another child draw a card. Repeat the process until all of the cards have been discussed. For added fun invite small groups of students to act out some of the situations.



HONESTY

HONESTY ACROSTIC POEMS

Help youngsters further investigate honesty when they create these awesome acrostic poems. As your students brainstorm ideas about the importance of being honest, list their ideas on chart paper. Next have each child use capital letters to write the word *honesty* down the left side of a sheet of drawing paper. Instruct students to refer to the chart as they write a descriptive word or phrase that begins with each letter of the word. Allow time for students to decorate their work. If desired mount the completed poems on larger sheets of construction paper. Then spread the word about honesty by displaying the projects around the room.



HONESTY

16

AS HONEST AS GEORGE WASHINGTON!

Use the famous legend of George Washington and the cherry tree to talk about the importance of telling the truth. Conclude the discussion with this "cherry-ful" activity that reinforces the values of honesty and truthfulness. Provide each student with a white construction-paper copy of the patterns on page 18, a six-inch green pipe cleaner, and a six-inch square of writing paper. Students will also need pencils, scissors, crayons, and access to clear tape and a stapler.

To make a cherry project like the one pictured, a child colors and cuts out her patterns. Next she traces the cherry cutout onto her writing paper. Inside the resulting outline, she completes the sentence starter. Then she cuts out the shape, aligns her colored cherry atop the resulting cutout, and staples the shapes together near the top left edge. To complete her project, the student tapes her leaf cutout near one end of her pipe cleaner and then tapes the resulting stem to the back of her project. Mount the completed charms on a large paper tree with the title "As Honest As George Washington!"

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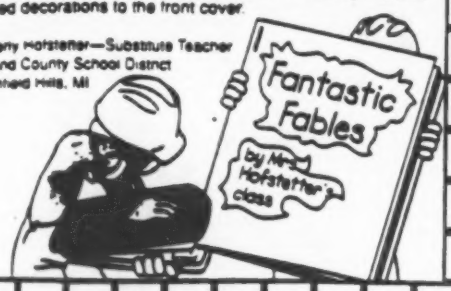
FANTASTIC FABLES

Fables are a great way to reinforce students' understanding of good character! Each day read aloud a fable, and discuss the lesson or moral of the story. After youngsters have heard a number of fables, challenge them to write and illustrate original fables that reinforce the importance of honesty. Remind students that the character(s) in their stories should learn a lesson about truthfulness. If desired ask each student to write a moral at the end of his fable that relates to the honesty lesson that he described. Invite students to share their creations with the rest of the class. Then collect the students' fables and staple them between two construction-paper covers. Add a title such as "Fantastic Fables," a class byline, and desired decorations to the front cover.

Kimberly Hofstetter—Substitute Teacher
Oakland County School District
Bloomfield Hills, MI



HONESTY

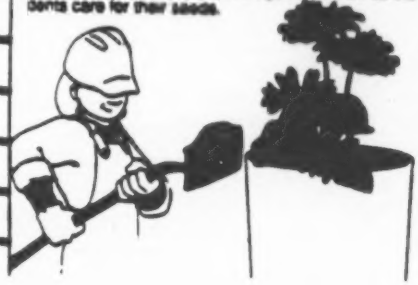
A PLEDGE TO BE HONEST

As a culminating activity, have youngsters make a pledge of honesty. Give students copies of the honesty pledge on page 18. Sing the pledge (to the tune of "Sailing, Sailing") or read it aloud as your class follows along. Talk with students about what the pledge means; then ask each child to sign his name and write the date on the lines. If desired have students mount their pledges on slightly larger sheets of construction paper. Challenge youngsters to memorize the pledge, then sing or recite it to others. No doubt your youngsters will perform the pledge with pride!

HONESTY

PLENTIFUL POTS

Use this literature connection to help your youngsters recognize the importance of telling the truth. In the story *The Empty Pot* by Demi (Henry Holt And Company, Inc., 1990), Ping learns a valuable lesson about honesty and perseverance. After sharing the story with your class, invite students to talk about how Ping's courage and honesty helped him become the emperor of China. Then have your youngsters create these unique reminders to commemorate Ping's accomplishment. Provide each student with a small Styrofoam® cup (with drainage holes punched in the bottom), soil, water, and a choice of flower seeds. Have youngsters use the materials to plant seeds in honor of Ping. Put the seed cups on a tray or cookie sheet and place them in a sunny location in your classroom. Memories of Ping's courage will live on as students care for their seeds.



HONESTY

TRULY TRUTHFUL TALES!

Bolster honest behaviors with these one-of-a-kind stories:

To Tell The Truth
Written by Pete Farmer & Illustrated by Stephen Taylor
Standard Kids, 1997

Honest Tulle
Written & Illustrated by John Himmelman
BridgeWater Books, 1997

Believing Sophie
Written by Hazel Hutchins
Illustrated by Dorothy Donohue
Albert Whitman & Company, 1995

Mary Maroney And The Chocolate Surprise
Written by Suzy Kline
Illustrated by Blanche Sims
G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995

Zack's Tall Tale
Adapted by Shelagh Canning
Illustrated by Dave Henry
Aladdin Paperbacks, 1996

King Bob's New Clothes
Written by Dom DeLuise
Illustrated by Christopher Santoro
Simon & Schuster Books For Young Readers, 1996

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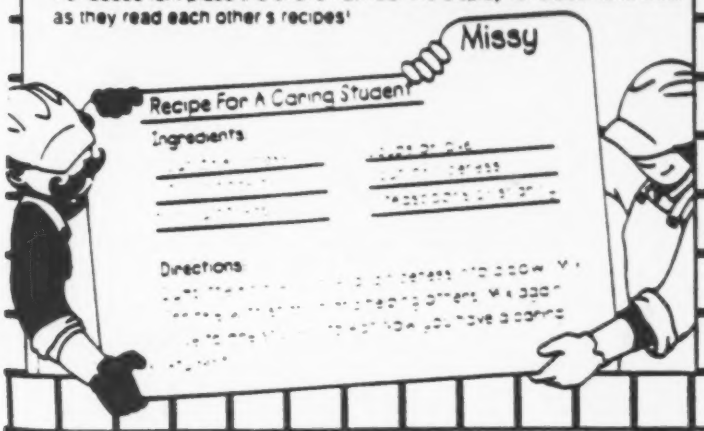
Recipes For A Caring Student

Create a stir as youngsters write recipes for a caring student! Don a chef's hat as you read aloud a few recipes with your class. Review the different words that are used when writing a recipe (cup, teaspoon, stir, mix, etc.), then have students brainstorm qualities that make a caring student. Write the students' ideas on chart paper. Provide each student with a preprogrammed copy of a large recipe card. Instruct each child to refer to the chart as he lists the necessary ingredients for a caring student. Next have him write directions for mixing these ingredients. Mount the completed recipes on a bulletin board for an eye-catching display. For added fun, place the chef's hat near the display for students to wear as they read each other's recipes!



The Caring Crown

Motivate caring students with this noble idea! Make a child-size crown similar to the one shown and laminate it for durability. Embellish the crown with glitter pens, stickers, or plastic jewels. Each day spotlight a different student who continually exhibits caring behaviors. Crown the student king or queen of the day and take a picture of the royal youngster with an instant camera. Use a permanent marker to write a personal message on the bottom of the photo. Send the picture home with the child to share with her family. Your kings and queens will wear the caring crown with pride!

CARING

A Rainbow Of A Room!

Reinforce the value of sharing and kindness with this unique activity. Draw a large fish on poster board, cut it out, and laminate it for durability. On the fish, tape one plastic jewel for every student. Display the colorful creation on a classroom wall or bulletin board and invite students to share their comments about it. After a few days, suggest to students how nice the room would look if additional jeweled fish were displayed. Then read aloud Marcus Pfister's book *The Rainbow Fish* (North-South Books, 1992). Discuss how happy the Rainbow Fish became when he learned to share with others. Have students describe additional ways they can share. Next provide each student with a small construction-paper fish cutout. Have him decorate his fish shape and embellish it with a jewel from the larger fish. Mount the student-decorated fish on the walls for a rainbow of a room!

Pam Wilson—Gr. 3, Ebenezer School, Statesville, NC

CARING

Books Worth Caring About!

Enlist the help of your school librarian or media specialist in locating additional children's books to enhance your values unit. Some good choices are:

Chester's Way
Written & illustrated by Kevin Henkes
Greenwillow Books, 1988

Gramma's Walk
Written & illustrated by Anna Grossnickle Hines
Greenwillow Books, 1993

Grandaddy's Place
Written by Helen V. Griffith
Illustrated by James Stevenson
Greenwillow Books, 1987

Snow White And Rose Red
Written by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
Retold & illustrated by Bernadette Watts
North-South Books, Inc., 1988

The Ugly Duckling
Written by Hans Christian Andersen
Retold by Adrian Mitchell
Illustrated by Jonathan Heale
Dorling Kindersley Publishers, Inc., 1994

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BUILDING CHARACTER WITH...CARING!

Who cares? Your students do—and you do, too! Use these character-building activities to strengthen your students' understanding of the virtues of caring and kindness. Watch youngsters exhibit considerate behaviors as they learn about caring for themselves and others!

Ideas by Darcy A. Brown

A Chain Of Caring

This classroom caring chain reminds students to always care for one another! Ask students to brainstorm ways that they exhibit kindness and list their ideas on chart paper. Provide each student with a strip of pastel construction paper. Have each student choose an idea from the list and write a sentence about it on her paper strip. Collect the programmed strips and use them to make a paper chain like the one shown. Display the completed chain on a wall or bulletin board with the title "We Care!" Throughout the year encourage students to program paper strips for the classroom chain as they observe additional acts of kindness.

Lending A Caring Hand!

Encourage students to lend a caring hand as they create this adorable booklet! As a prewriting activity, read aloud a favorite children's book that depicts caring behavior. (One excellent choice is *The Child's World Of Caring* by Jane Belk Moncure [The Child's World, Inc.; 1997]. The book's simple text and colorful pictures portray a wide variety of caring behavior.) Next invite students to brainstorm ways that they can show how much they care. Give each student a large construction-paper hand cutout. On the chalkboard list an assortment of sentence starters—such as "I care for myself when I...." "I care for others when I...." and "I care for the Earth when I...." Have each student copy, complete, and illustrate one sentence on her cutout. Collect the students' completed work and assemble it into a booklet. Hole-punch the resulting booklet pages and two hand-shaped booklet covers; then use yarn to bind the pages between the covers. Add the title "Lending A Caring Hand," a class byline, and desired decorations to the front booklet cover. Then place the class caring booklet at a center or in your classroom library for everyone to enjoy!

CARING

"We Care!" Basket

For those times when you'd like to shower a student or his family with caring thoughts (due to a serious illness, hospitalization, a death in the family, etc.), involve your youngsters in creating this one-of-a-kind gift. Begin by sharing your favorite version of the children's book *Stone Soup*. Discuss how the characters in the story helped one another make a delicious soup. Next display a basket for the class. Explain to your students that they will be working together to create a special gift basket. Ask each student to bring to school a small piece of fruit. When the gifts of fruit have been collected, have students write personal messages of caring on fruit-shaped cutouts. Arrange the messages and fruit in the basket. Wrap the entire basket in colorful plastic wrap and secure the top with a bow and a personalized gift tag. Then present or deliver the "We Care!" basket. Continue this thoughtful practice throughout the year. Youngsters will experience the joys of kindness, caring, and generosity with every special gift!

Patty Young—Grs. K–4
Linton Hall School · Bristow, VA

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